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MERCY & TRUTH

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The Land's End, Cornwall.—PAGE 1.

MERCY AND TRUTH.

BRIEF NARRATIVES OF REAL LIFE.

EDITED BY

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PREFACE.

THE intelligent reader of the Old Testament will have remarked the very frequent recurrence of the expression, "Mercy and Truth." It would seem to have been a favourite term of the Old Testament saints, implying their sense of God's innate lovingkindness, and faithfulness to his promises. The first person who appears to have made use of it was Abraham's pious servant, Eliezer, who, at his interview with Rebekah, at the well at Nahor, said to her, "Blessed be the Lord God of my master Abraham, who hath not left destitute my master of his mercy and truth" (Gen. xxiv. 27). Subsequently, we find Jacob making use of it, in the course of his earnest prayer at Mahanaim: "I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies and of all the truth, which Thou hast showed unto Thy servant" (Gen. xxxii. 10, and compare with Gen. xxviii. 15). And, to pass over other occasions of its use in the intervening books of the Old Testament, we find the expression repeatedly in the mouth of David, *e. g.*, "Thy mercy is great unto the heavens, and Thy truth unto the clouds" (Ps. lvii. 10). "O prepare mercy and truth, which may preserve him" (Ps. lxi. 7). "Mercy and truth shall go before Thy face" (Ps. lxxxix. 14).

"God shall send forth his mercy and truth" (Ps. lvii. 3). "Thou art a God...plenteous in mercy and truth" (Ps. lxxxvi. 15). ."All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth, unto such as keep his covenant, and his testimonies" (Ps. xxv. 10).

Now, if these old saints, under their twilight dispensation, were able to entertain such loving, cheerful, and hopeful views of God, how much more should we enjoy them in our blaze of Gospel light, with our superior knowledge of the *way* of God's mercy through Jesus, and our infinitely larger store of precious promises!

It is with a view to help in this direction that I send out another series of narratives from the early numbers of the *Friendly Visitor*. Example is said to be better than precept. History (and therefore biography, the history of individuals) is said to be teaching by example.

In order that the perusal of the following pages may be really profitable, I would suggest to those who read them that they should keep their eyes prominently on these points:—

1. Observe in these instances how God showed his mercy and truth in *the receiving of returning sinners*. He has repeatedly assured us that "He willeth not the death of a sinner, but would rather that he should be converted and live;" and that like a loving Father, He is always ready to welcome the prodigal son, whenever he *wishes* to come back. What testimony to this is the expression at page 163, "No words can express the relief which that prayer gave to my agonized heart!" and again, the case of the soldier, at page 181.

Then, 2nd. Observe the mercy and truth of God in *teaching* those who thus return to Him, sometimes through

the ordinary means of grace; but often also by the immediate influence of the Holy Spirit, almost independently of means. How many a Christian might be shamed by the superior knowledge of some of these poor persons, who, perhaps, had not been blessed with half their religious advantages.

3. Observe the mercy and truth of God in enabling some of these persons to *overcome the evil traits and habits of their nature.* Do you, reader, find a difficulty here? Remember that God has said, "My grace is sufficient for you." And see how it was "sufficient" for the man of *passion* at page 174, and the *covetous farmer*, at page 138, and the *gaming, dishonest, swearing, drinking soldier*, at page 180.

4. Observe the mercy and truth of God in enabling many of these persons *to bear the sorest trials of life* with Christian resignation and fortitude. See, for instance, Old William's happy trust in God (page 30); and how Thomas Shaw was able to keep up against all the trials of bad society, which he could not avoid (page 31); and the grievous burden of a wife's failings (page 34). See how the "Mother of the Parish" bore with the failings of others (page 98); look at the happy poverty of Grace Summers (page 93); and the cheerful trust of Old Hannah (page 148), and of Poor Hester, who, though "faint for want of food," would gently say, "God will not let us starve."

There are, doubtless, many other points which each reader will find out for himself. But these are such as have most forcibly struck me in preparing the narratives for the press.

I have inserted two or three narratives of a very different character, which I have thought might be useful by way of contrast. For, though it is so true, that God "keeps

mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression," yet it is equally true that "He will by no means clear the guilty" (Exod. xxxiv. 7), *i.e.*, those who keep themselves guilty, by refusing to humble themselves for pardon, and to give up their evil ways. Martha (page 41), and Hannah (page 49), and the other instances (at page 120 and page 133) are solemn and melancholy warnings, reminding us that, while God in Christ is a God full of mercy—if any one rejects Christ, he can expect no mercy.

Though these biographies are short, and consequently perhaps imperfectly drawn, yet I am not sure that there is not *one* positive advantage in a number of brief biographies over one that might be portrayed more at length. The advantage is this, that they supply *an accumulative evidence* of the working of God's grace. It is not one case, which an objector might say is an idiosyncrasy; but it is a number of instances, in all of which may be seen a similarity of Christian experience. Wherever God's mercy and truth is at work, through the influence of the Holy Spirit, there will be similar results.

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MERCY AND TRUTH.

ROGER WALTERS, THE MINER.

About two years before his death, Roger Walters came into my parish in Cornwall, with his wife, two boys, and a girl. He worked in a mine at a little distance, and often have I lamented that such a person should have come here, fearing that his bad example would be the means of leading others to drink and swear, as he was often at the public-house half the night, and when he returned home would use the most shocking language to his wife and children. I had often spoken to him on the evil of such practices; but one day hearing that he had again been out the greatest part of the

night drinking, I resolved to warn him once more of his guilt and danger.

I met him in the evening in the field returning from the mine, and told him how much concerned I was to hear of his conduct, and that if he continued his present practices, they must lead him to endless ruin. I entreated him to flee from the wrath to come. He appeared to be very much provoked at what I said to him, and spoke with not a little anger, scarcely waiting for the end of my sentence. The Holy Spirit, however, fastened the few words which a poor, weak fellow-sinner uttered with fear and trembling, as a nail in a sure place; and though he used every effort to forget what had been said to him, and to stifle conscience, it was in vain. He was convinced that it was all true, and that unless he gave up swearing, drinking, and Sabbath breaking, and applied to the blood which had been shed for sinners, hell must be his portion. The work of grace was, however, very slow, and for a long time almost hid from the eye of man; but still it was the work of the Spirit, and He

who had begun it, carried it on; though slowly, yet surely. From this time I used often to converse with him; and he would go in to his wife, saying, "I know what Mr. —— says is all true; I am resolved to give up sin, and serve the Lord."

One evening when he was going to bed, he heard his neighbours, two pious people, praying together, when he was again awfully struck with a sense of his own unprepared state for death and judgment to come. He said to his wife, "Betsy, this will never do; why is it we do not pray as well as our neighbours?" Then he requested her to bring him a prayer-book, and knelt down and read a prayer out of it with much feeling; but even at this time he was now and then tempted to drink, though not nearly so much, nor so often as he used to be, and the thought of it the next day brought much anguish and distress with it. His body, likewise, which was in a very weak state, suffered much from these practices, and this, I believe, was partly the means of his giving them up, and on his death bed he said that

Mr. ——'s watchfulness over him was a great help, as he reasoned with him on the guilt and danger of such courses, when he heard he had been at the public-house again.

He became, however, by degrees a praying man. Night and morning, and often in the day, he retired to his chamber for prayer, and after he had been up all night at the mine, he would not go to rest till he had been on his knees, praying in the most simple, earnest, spiritual strain. At the beginning, and long after, he found prayer the hardest work, and was often tempted to give it wholly up; but before his death he said it was the greatest delight he had in this world. I have reason to believe that he was much assisted in this exercise, as well as in the knowledge of the more important doctrines of the Gospel, by reading and meditating in the Scriptures, which he did daily.

A few weeks before his death, being unable to work, the captain of the mine allowed him to watch there all night and the whole of the Sunday, without having anything to do.

His friends who watched over his soul, when they no longer saw his seat occupied in the church, were alarmed for him, fearing that the want of those public means, which he had so much enjoyed in times past as his food and drink, would be hurtful to his spiritual concerns, and they spoke to him on the subject. He seemed to feel the want of them, and promised to try to get some one to watch for him for a part of the Sunday, whilst he went once to the house of God. The rules of the mine, however, would not admit of this. He, therefore, continued to watch, thinking it his path of duty, as he could not provide for his family in any other way.

But he was doubly diligent in the use of private means. There, in the dead of the night, he poured out his soul before the Lord, and enjoyed the sweetest seasons of prayer. He used generally to pray aloud, and as a neighbour was one evening passing that way, she heard, as she thought, persons talking together; but on listening, she found it was poor Walters communing with his God and Saviour.

When he first came here, he had the greatest dread of spending a night alone at the mine; but when he became acquainted with the Eternal God in Christ Jesus, as his refuge, his defence, his all in all, he no longer feared it; but, on the contrary, he considered it to be his greatest privilege to hold communion with his God and Saviour in the darkest night there, as in his own house he was often disturbed by the children.

He seems to have had a deep sense of his own lost state by nature, and often said that such a vile sinner as he was deserved nothing better than hell. When feeling the agonies of death, he repeated many times, "What is this to hell, which must have been my portion, if Jesus had not died for sinners such as I am!" But it was not till the last few weeks of his life, when he was in the mine, that he could firmly believe that his sins were all pardoned, that he was accepted in Christ, the beloved of the Father, who had suffered death on the cross for his sins. About a week before his death he was obliged to give up going to the mine, where he

had spent so many happy hours, and in a few days he was confined to his bed.

On the Sunday night before he died, he said he had been greatly troubled, fearing that such a sinner as he had been could never get to heaven; that the blood of Jesus could not cleanse away such sins as he had committed. He was in the act of praying to the Lord to strengthen his faith, when a Christian friend, who had been made of great use to him before, came into the room, and began to speak to him on the love of Christ to poor sinners, and the blessedness of the place He had prepared for them. He said he could not help thinking that he was a messenger sent from God, in answer to prayer, to strengthen him in his departing moments; and whilst conversing with him, he seemed to forget his pains, and his doubts vanished. He said he wished he could always have some of the Lord's people with him, because he thought that they might be made of use in overcoming Satan when he tried to tempt him, though he knew the Lord alone could subdue his power. He mentioned one

sermon as having made a great impression on him, or rather this sentence in it: "If we have Christ, we have all we can possibly want."

From this time he was resolved that he would keep close to Him, and give up all for Him. He had found this hard work, and yet it had been pleasant work, for he had never been so happy as since he began to seek the Lord. At one time he appeared very languid, and said, "I am very ill; I am dying," apparently with some degree of fear. "Well," it was said to him by a Christian friend, "look to Jesus; He has overcome death, and prepared for you, I trust, eternal life." These few words seemed to put life into his dying frame. With a countenance which expressed more than words, he said, "Oh yes, my dear Saviour, Jesus, has suffered for me; death is swallowed up in victory."

Some hours after he appeared to be in great agony, but said, "It is not more than I can bear. My dear Saviour is with me, and though I suffer much, He supports me under it; He is very precious to my soul. O Lord, I have been

a wicked sinner; I have lived in sin and forgetfulness for forty years, and yet Thou art now going to take me to live with Thee in heaven." Then he said, "Death! what is death to the Christian? It is nothing."

After this, he called his little girl to him, about twelve years of age, and said to her, "My dear, your father will soon leave you. If you are a good child, and follow your Saviour, you will come where I hope I shall soon be. Beware of the temptations of the devil; he will lay many snares for you. The world is wicked, and there are many wicked people. Don't follow them. You must pray; the Lord will help you if you ask Him."

He requested the minister of the parish to speak to the young people after his death, and tell them to seek the Lord in their youth, and not to leave it to a dying hour.

Some of his last words were these, "Now, Lord Jesus, into Thy hands I commit my body, soul, and spirit. Keep me for ever at Thy bleeding side ——" Here his breath failed, and in a few moments after, he fell

asleep in Jesus, without a struggle, sigh, or groan.

A sermon was preached to a numerous and attentive congregation on the day of his funeral from these words, "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: that as sin hath reigned unto death; even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord."

THE CHILD'S QUESTION.

"WHERE are you going to-night, Mr. Brownlow? Are you going to get drunken?" asked a little fair-haired girl, of four or five years of age, addressing a young man, whose countenance gave evidence that he was a confirmed drunkard. As the child spoke, she stretched her arms across the doorway at which she stood, ignorantly supposing that she could by those means prevent his passage through it.

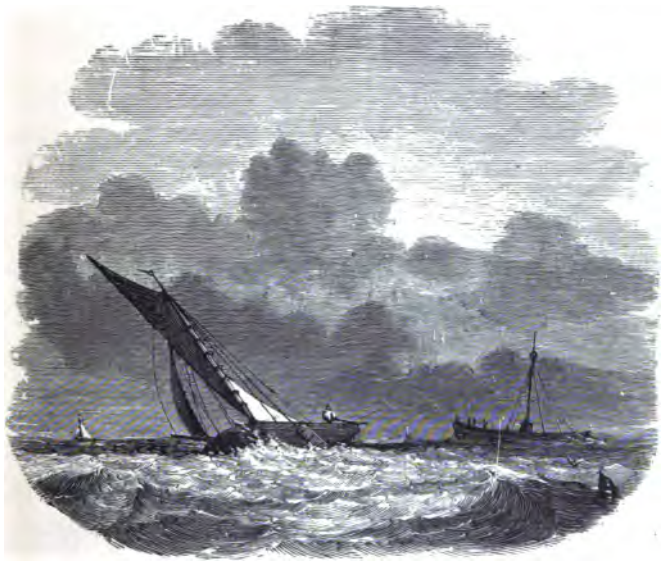
Little Annie was the pet and plaything of Brownlow's sober hours. He had no children of his own, and he felt for her an almost paternal affection. Her question had a startling effect upon him, and he stopped abruptly.

"You shan't pass, that you shan't; I won't let you," she half-playfully, half-earnestly added, still retaining her position.

There is something in the innocent prattle of childhood which goes straight to the heart.

Brownlow, depraved as he was, felt its power. His superior strength could, of course, have enabled him, without the slightest difficulty, to push his way on, notwithstanding the barrier; but either a sense of shame, or tenderness towards the child, prevented his resisting those little arms, and he turned and went up stairs to his own apartments.

William Brownlow was a lodger in the house which was rented by Annie's father. Unhappily for the poor child and her mother, they were associates in sin. Young as she was, therefore, she was no stranger to the miseries which drunkenness produces. Brownlow had been what is termed wild from his youth. He had early deserted his home for a seafaring life; but having metwith an accident, which had rendered him incapable of any longer following his calling, he had subsequently served a brief apprenticeship to the shoemaking business. He possessed good natural abilities, and was, consequently, very soon able to earn a comfortable living; but the destructive habit of drinking to excess, which he had acquired when at sea, not only prevented



"He had early deserted his home for a seafaring life."—PAGE 12.

his devoting the necessary hours to labour, but absorbed the principal part of the money he earned, and thus often left his wife (for he was now married) without the common necessaries of life.

The young man had pursued this sinful course for nearly three years. He had, during that period, many fearful warnings, having witnessed the dreadful death of one of his wicked companions, and had himself several narrow escapes with his life. These warnings had, however, been disregarded; conscience had been stifled by fresh draughts of the intoxicating drink. But that obdurate heart, which was proof against the terrors of death, quailed beneath the question of this child. "Is it obvious to this little creature that I am committing sin?" he said to himself, as he entered the room; "how great, then, must my sin be in the eyes of the pure and holy God! Surely He put the words in her mouth, and bid her stretch out her tiny arms to prevent my departure." As those thoughts passed through his mind, a sense of his iniquity—such as he had never felt before

—came over him, and, in the anguish of his spirit, he threw himself on the ground and wept.

Mrs. Brownlow had been ill during the day, and had retired early to rest in the adjoining chamber. She concluded that her husband would, as usual, spend the greater part of the night at a public-house, and was, therefore, much surprised when she heard his steps again upon the stairs. Supposing, however, that he had returned for something he had forgotten, she took no further notice, until the noise occasioned by his sobs met her ear. Sarah Brownlow had experienced very little happiness in her wedded state; but she loved her husband with all his faults, and did not often reproach him, as with justice she might have done, for his neglect and ill-treatment. Her good management had kept their house in order and comfort; and she had, by her industry, often earned a few shillings, which had saved them from being turned out of that home, and frequently from absolute want. Alarmed at a sound so unusual, she now got out of bed, and went with trembling steps to the sitting-room. What a sight presented itself!—

the strong, proud man, who had laughed at danger both on land and sea, weeping like a child!

So appalling were the convictions of sin which now assailed the conscience of Brownlow, that he refused to be comforted. His poor wife was herself ignorant of the only true source of consolation. All she could do, therefore, was to assure him of *her* forgiveness, and tell him that God was too good to punish him for ever, if he was resolved on leading a better life.

He lay through the hours of night on the floor of that chamber, giving vent to anguish amounting to despair, in bitter cries and lamentations. Finding that her presence did but heighten his misery, his wife went back to bed; but she was too ill and too unhappy to sleep. An epidemic, then prevalent in the town, had infected her, and she tossed from side to side with the restless motion which attends a raging fever.

The unhappiness Brownlow endured tended to weaken his body, and disable him from business in the morning. In addition to this, he had caught the contagion from his wife, and he

was now glad to throw himself upon his bed. Sarah made an effort to rise and prepare some breakfast: but this done, she sank exhausted by his side.

They were now reduced to a most pitiable condition. The inhabitants of the house, having discovered that their lodgers were suffering from the dreaded disease, inhumanly kept aloof. Their neighbours and acquaintances did the same. Not one of those who had associated with him in sin came near him in his affliction. By these means they were cut off from all supply of food, further than that which they had in the house previous to the attack.

The horrors which Brownlow's mind underwent were far greater than his bodily pain, severe though it was; and as death seemed to approach, they increased tenfold. His wife had a pocket Bible, one which had been given to her as a reward for good behaviour on leaving a Sunday-school; and though her eyes were dim from want of rest, she contrived to read from it some portions, which she hoped might convey comfort. They produced, however, a contrary effect. He

could see no prospect of mercy; his sins were, he said, too great, and he had indulged in them too long, for God ever to grant him forgiveness.

The suffering couple would have died uncared-for in that lonely chamber, had not Providence opened a way for their relief. Sarah wrote on a slip of paper a brief statement of their sad condition, with a request that the person into whose hands it might fall would send a surgeon to their aid: this done, she tied something heavy to a corner of the paper, and then threw it below.

The house in which they lived was in a lane little frequented; it might, therefore, be an hour or two ere any person passed; still the poor woman was resolved, if possible, to sit and watch. She did so for some considerable time. At length a footstep was heard: the next moment a man appeared, but he passed the paper, either without seeing it, or without curiosity to peruse its contents. Sarah's heart sickened within her. Being by this time so much exhausted that she could with difficulty retain her seat, she was about to leave her

pathetic appeal to its fate, when another step caught her eager ear. A boy with a basket approached; he picked up the paper, and, opening it, read its contents as he went on. In less than an hour they were visited by a benevolent medical man, who not only afforded them medical aid, but sent a woman to wait on them.

We are happy to say that Brownlow's convictions of sin did not pass away—as is not unfrequently the case—like the morning cloud, or the early dew. He rose from his sick bed with a determination to lead a reformed life. His resolutions were not, however, grounded on his own strength, for that he had already found to be perfect weakness. He sought aid from above, by earnest and persevering prayer. He became a sober, industrious, and respectable man, doing his utmost to further the cause of temperance, morality, and religion in the little circle in which he moves. The last time the writer heard of him he was a tract distributor, and, just then, deeply interested in establishing an infant-school in the district in which he resides. The above facts were related by himself; for he is

free to confess the sins of his earlier days, always tracing his first convictions of sin to the question put to him by that little child, and looking upon her as the human instrument used by God in accomplishing his reformation.

SWEET is the Spirit's strain,
Breathed by soft pleadings inly heard,
By all the heart's deep fountains stirr'd;
By conscience, and the written Word;—
Come, wanderers, home again!

The Bride repeats the call;
By high thanksgiving, lowly prayer,
By days of rest, and fostering care,
By holy rites, that all may share;
She whispers, Come! to all.

Let him who hears say, Come!
If thou hast been sin's wretched slave;
If thou art risen from that grave;
Thy sleeping brethren seek to save,
And call the wanderers home.

And let all come who thirst!
Freely, for every child of woe,
The streams of living waters flow;
And whosoever will may go
Where healing fountains burst.

There drink and be at rest;
On Him who died for thee believe;
The Spirit's quickening grace receive;
No more the God who seeks thee grieve;
Be holy, and be blest!

A SON OF GOD.

OLD WILLIAM had lived as a humble and consistent Christian for many years, though little known even by those who would have valued him most; but "his life was hid with Christ in God;" and as the time drew near that he should die, an increased experience of the exceeding riches of Divine grace was granted to him, with new and enlarged powers of utterance, to make them known for the benefit of those around him.

At first it was very difficult to understand what he said, except a few broken sentences or single words, enough to show that where his treasure was there was his heart also. Afterwards his strength revived for a time, and he was enabled more fully to bear his testimony to the power of real religion in his soul; of which the following expressions uttered at different seasons are among the proofs.

"I say 'tis a grand thing to be a child

of God—it's more to be desired than thousands of gold and silver, that's all to me now." Speaking of the past, he added: "The more I've asked of God the more I've always had—the more I've sought, the more I've always found; and it mun be so, for 't isn't said, 'Ask, and ye may have; seek, and ye may find;' but 'Ask, and ye shall have; seek, and ye shall find:' so it mun be; I've only to believe." At another time: "I'm a poor worm, but Christ has looked on me and saved me. I would love Him more than I do. A worm He called his servant Jacob; so I mun be worse than a worm, a needy sinner—that's me!"

He was asked, "What have you to say in looking back on the past, William?" He replied, "Aye, I've found the ways of God ways of pleasantness and joy, such as naught can be found away from Him." At another time: "Sure the unsearchable riches of Christ must mean the promises of God; you know they are all yea and amen, all true in Christ Jesus; I know they've been riches to me, riches in all my poverty." At another time: "I feel sometimes how I love

everybody, and it is a very comfortable feeling; I can't think of anybody that I've an unkind thought of—that's wonderful; it wasn't always so; I hope it is because I love Christ, who loved the whole world—aye, I only wish the whole world loved Him back again." Another day: "Well, I say grace is a glorious thing; once it was naught to me, and Christ was naught to me —now it is my all—it's my whole desire—we've only to ask for grace—'tis paid for, for us—it's all free to us—sure it's a gain way of getting it only by asking and believing—but you know it is so—it mun be so."

The next day his sufferings were great in various ways; but the same grace of which he had been speaking was practically evinced by the meekness and patience with which he endured them; and when asked, "How are you to-day, William?" he replied, "Aye, I'm just as God wishes me to be, and that's best for me. Christ is just to me all that I can want—He's always fulfilling his promise— I've never aught to do but to tell Him my wants, and He gives me all—He gives me Him-

self. It is hard work to flesh and blood to be heaving so for breath, but I hope God will give me patience till the end. I know He will, for He says He will succour those who are tempted; and He's not a man that He should lie, nor the son of man that He should repent. He'll sure make a way to escape, that we may be able to bear it while it's upon us, and He'll one day make me a way to escape from this poor body, and that will be the most blessed thing."

Another day, speaking of the value of the Bible to him now, he added: "I lig me here, and remember his Word, and that's a blessed thing that I can do so—there's here a precept and there a precept, and here's a promise and there's a promise—all working one along with the other, and all for one end—our everlasting life—God is faithful—He can't give up his Word—I'm naught, only weakness in myself, I'm naught but weakness, but I can feel that God is carrying on his own work in my heart, though I am not always alike to myself; yet He'll perform his work—it always has been so—it is so—it mun be so." And in alluding to his many past

omissions, and his increasing sense of his own sinfulness, when he examined his heart by God's holy law, he said, "I do desire to be made low and contrite—we mun not be always at top of the tree, God will have us down to lig beneath it, and to gather bitter herbs from off the ground." Again, "God has different ways of dealing with his people—some He brings into his kingdom all by terrors, and others He brings in all by love." It was asked, "And how was it with you, William?" "Oh! it was all by love."

Some weeks after there was again every appearance of death in him, especially during the night; and when it was inquired next morning, "How did you feel last night when you thought yourself just going?" he replied, "Well, ma'am, I had the sweet hope to say, 'Come, Lord Jesus;' but it did not please Him so to do; and you know it mun be his time, it mun be; but He gives me such liberty and comfort while He keeps me waiting for Him, that I cannot be discontent"—(and then, as if addressing himself to the Saviour in ejaculation, he went on without a pause, and putting his hands in the

posture of prayer)—" how is it, Lord, that Thou shouldst do so; for I've been an unfaithful, unprofitable servant to Thee?" It was said to him, " He doth not deal with us after our sins, nor reward us after our iniquities; for if He should mark our iniquities, who can stand?" Old William continued: " But there is mercy with Jesus the Saviour, that He may be feared." Prayer was then offered for him; and when concluded, he said, " Glory be to God, prayer is a sacrifice well pleasing and acceptable to Him; 'tis making known our case to Him." It was replied, " Yes, it is made acceptable when offered in the name of his dear Son." William rejoined, with all the earnestness of which he was capable, " Aye, that's it; 'tis He makes it clean as it goes up, and then 'tis fit for God to hear."

A day or two after this he was asked, " What do you think of Christ now?" He replied, " Why, that's almost hard to answer, for I've kept coming to Him and looking at Him now this long bit; but I know not half enough of Him to say much; I know He's faithful,

such as none other can be; I know He's a Saviour, such as none other can be; I know what He is to me by feeling what He has done for me; but I can't express much about Him, as many can—I can't talk and explain like a many do." It was said, "But you think Him a master well worth serving, William, don't you?" He answered, "Why, sure He mun be that, for all things are ours if we are Christ's, 'postle says, even things present and things to come, and life and death; and there's more besides, which I've clean forgot, and I know 'tis a poor mack that's got in working and toiling for this world."

He was noted for his love and respect for the ministers of God, and said more than once that he thought those were doing Satan's work who tried to set the minds of others against them; "for," said he, "the Bible calls it Satan's work to stop men's ears, lest they should hear the Word, and be converted and healed; and they are doing just the same." After this he was requested to remember his absent minister in his prayers, and it was urged

upon him by the claim that ministers have upon their people. He replied, with great feeling, "Yes sure, for he labours for souls, and that's oft a sore labour—he's got a rough way to walk in here; but 'his shoes shall be iron and brass;' (and forgetting the remainder of the verse, it was supplied for him) 'and as his day is, his strength shall be' (Deut. xxxiii. 25). And," he continued, "God is faithful—I hope he'll be the means of turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just—I know he's naught as a man, but Christ in him can do all things." And then, speaking of a young minister who often visited him, he added: "God Almighty bless him! I say 'tis the best of all works that he has ta'en in hand, though it mun be rough work sometimes; but God won't let him faint, and He'll give him bits of 'courage-ment here and there, that he may see God is faithful—He'll never leave him nor forsake him—He has said so, and that He never will; and He can't be with him for naught, according to my thinking."

Next day being Saturday, it was said to

"You will not need the prayers of the church to-morrow."—PAGE 29.

him, "I think, William, you will not need the prayers of the church to-morrow." He at once understood what was meant, and answered, "Sure not, if I'm got along with the church of the first-born; and it cannot be long now." It was with the greatest difficulty that his words could be understood, for his breath seemed nearly departing, and his pains were very great. But he was evidently engaged in prayer, and the following petitions were distinguished and noted down:—"Merciful Jesus, Thou knowest my case; Thou art faithful; grant me patience; Thou wilt, for Thou hast said so; Thou wilt never leave nor forsake me; Thou hast carried me all along this fifty, this sixty, this eighty years, and I can pay Thee naught back again." Contrary to expectation, he was alive on the next morning; and after service at church, in allusion to the text of the sermon, "Our Father, which art in heaven," he was asked whether he could not call God his Father, in the fullest confidence of a child. Though his flesh was well nigh failing, yet his whole heart seemed to kindle at the thought, and, in the true spirit of adoption,

he most ardently expressed the full assurance of his hope, and the entire peace and satisfaction it produced in his mind with respect to all his Father's appointments; adding, "Wherever He places me, it is just there I would be; and whatever He wills me to suffer, that would I bear;" and more to the same effect. Into the hands of his Heavenly Father he committed his surviving children without a care or a fear. He lingered one more day, and entered into his heavenly rest, aged eighty-three years.

THOMAS SHAW AND HIS FAMILY.

No one was more respected by all who knew him than Thomas Shaw. I came to know him by often meeting him in my evening walks, as he returned from his day's labour, in a stone quarry near the town; and I was so much pleased with his look and manners, that I made some inquiry about him from his master. He assured me that he would rather take Thomas Shaw's word than the oath of many of his workmen; for he never knew him guilty of an untruth, or of slighting his work when he could not be found out, or trifling away his time. And among his fellow-workmen in the quarry, Thomas was as much beloved; although he would never join with them in a drunken frolic, or laugh at an indecent jest, yet if any of them had a hard piece of work to do, or wanted a helping hand, or a good word to be spoken for them

to their master, Thomas was always willing to put himself out of the way to do them a good turn. And on Sunday at church—methinks I see him now, in his seat, with his prayer-book in his hand, his thread-bare jacket, and white hair combed down on each side of his weathen-beaten face. You could not help saying to yourself, "surely piety and resignation to the divine will, and a hope full of immortality dwell there." During prayers, his face was covered with his hands, which sometimes gently raised a little, showed that the heart, as well as the lips, was engaged in prayer.

Yes, my dear readers, Thomas Shaw knew the worth of prayer. He did not think it enough to come to church merely to hear a good sermon, and be instructed in his duty; he knew that he stood in need of the Holy Spirit of God to help him to perform it; he wanted also pardon for sins; a humble and a contrite heart; heavenly affections, and patience to support the trials of his lot; and all these blessings he knew could only be obtained by prayer. He prayed also

much for his wife and family; for alas! he feared they prayed too little for themselves. Martha Shaw, to be sure, was a sad wife for a poor man; and, indeed, had her husband been a rich one, her want of care would soon have made him poor. The wages which Thomas got on the Saturday night were mostly all gone the next Monday, either in paying the debts of the week before, or in buying things unfit for them; and though he often worked over-hours, in order to have a little more comfort about them, yet he never found that it made much difference. If there was any news to be heard, or idle sight to be seen, away ran Martha, with her hair from under her cap, her stockings in holes, and her petticoat hanging in tatters—the idlest of the idle. She would spend hours in gossip at a neighbour's house, complaining of their poverty, and how hard it was to see other folk so much better off in the world than she was; crying shame of one person, and abusing another—for you will always find those, who are blind to their own faults, quick-sighted

enough to the failings of others. Let poor Thomas return from work when he would, he was sure to find everything dirty and in disorder, and his wife either gossiping abroad, or scolding at home. Thomas, however, bore all things patiently; he never thought of making his wife's faults an excuse for flying in a passion, or neglecting his duty to her. He knew from the Scriptures that "the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance;" and he bore in mind our Saviour's words, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow me." He viewed Martha's temper as the cross allotted to him; and instead of making bad worse, by going to the ale-house to be out of the way, he sought for comfort, and found it in his Bible, and his God.

They had had several children, who all died in infancy, except a boy and a girl, who unhappily were left too much to the care of such a mother. Thomas loved them tenderly,

gave them good advice, and paid for their schooling; but he went to his work before they were risen in the morning, and often did not return until late at night; so that the instruction he gave them was too often done away by the folly of their mother during the day. She told the schoolmaster she would take them from school if ever he corrected them; for nobody should beat her children but herself, that she was resolved. And as to learning, she never saw any great good come of it for her part. Being always in the habit of hearing such talk as this, the children, as you may suppose, took no pains to improve; and by telling their mother they should be beaten for not having learnt their lessons, or by crying or sullenness, they knew how to gain a holiday at any time; which she always granted, on condition that they should not tell their father; so that whenever there was an idle frolic, or party of pleasure, they were always ready to be of the number, if they could either deceive their father, or get money from their mother.

Thomas Shaw always spent his Sundays at church, and in his own family; and did what he could to prevent any wrong use of that sacred day. One Sunday, however, his son William, and some young men in the town, made a party to go to R——, in the steam-packet, which, I am sorry to say, the public crier announced would set sail from a place near the town in the morning, and return at a certain hour in the evening. As soon as his father got to know, he strictly forbade William to go with the young men; and talked to him earnestly and kindly on the heavy sin he would commit by daring wilfully to break the command of his God. William, however, was too angry, and too much vexed to profit by what his father said. He declared it was very hard he must never have any pleasure, like other young people; he only wished to go just for once; that his father did not need make such a piece of work about one Sunday; that he was more particular than any one else. Martha joined in with her son, but in vain: Thomas knew it was his duty to be firm, and he would

"Made a party to go in the steam-packet."—PAGE 36.

not give way; so William was forced to go and tell the young men to set off without him, for he could not go. But they all joined in persuading him, and laughed at his scruples. William's passions were under little control. He had been indulged by his mother in all his wishes. His own strength to resist temptation was perfect weakness; and alas! he sought not power from on high; what wonder, therefore, that he fell! He said, however, as he ran along, "I will go just this once, but I will never do so again, I am sure."—"And we will never ask you," said they all; and away they ran. Their words proved too true.

The party was large, and merry; the day warm, and the ale good; they drank until they were quite drunk; and on their return, stepping out of the steam-packet into a small boat in order to land, it was upset, and eleven of them were plunged into the river. All were saved, except two, whose bodies were not found until the next morning. William Shaw's was one.

Who can describe the grief of William's parents? The mother's indeed was loud and violent; but his poor father wept not—spoke not. He pressed his hand upon his throbbing heart, which was agonized almost to bursting; raised his eyes to heaven, and tried to say, "It is the Lord, let Him do what seemeth Him good." And could he, indeed, have laid his son's body in the grave, "in sure and certain hope of a joyful resurrection," he would have exclaimed with holy David, "Why should I weep? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me." But William had died with all his sins unrepented of; he had been called away in the very act of rebelling against his God, and in breaking one of his most sacred commands. He had neglected his Bible, slighted the good instructions of his father, and stifled the checks of his own conscience. What mercy, therefore, might he dare to hope for at the great day of account from an insulted God, and a despised Saviour? Thoughts like these dwelt much upon the mind of poor Thomas; and what could cause keener anguish to a truly

pious parent? His health had been for some time declining, owing to a severe cold he had caught by working in the rain; and though he did not complain, his appetite failed, and his cheeks grew pale. But as the outward man perished, the inward man was renewed day by day. In reading the Bible, he found his greatest happiness—in prayer, his sweetest comfort. Oh! how fervently did he implore the Holy Spirit to sanctify his now only child, and how lovingly did he beg Mary that she would not bring down his grey hairs with sorrow to the grave, but remember her Creator in the days of her youth. But alas, alas! Mary was young, and vain, and giddy; and had learnt from her mother that if she shunned gross sin, it was all that was needed; that her father was righteous overmuch; and that so much religion only served to make people dull and moping; and besides all this she had become attached to a young soldier, who belonged to a regiment which had been some weeks quartered in the town; and whom she came to know by going with other idle young

women to see the parade. She was sure her parents would not like this connection; and therefore took great pains to hide it from them; and when the regiment was removed to a town about twenty miles off, her lover persuaded her to gain her parents' consent to visit an aunt who lived in that place. She did so; and a few weeks after, her aunt came over to tell them that she was gone off with the villain, under a promise of marriage; which, however, he could not fulfil, as on making inquiry amongst his comrades, she found he had already a wife, living in Ireland.

The instant poor Thomas heard the news, weak and heart-broken as he was, he set off on foot to bring back, if possible, his sinful child to her home; but he had not gone above a dozen miles before he sank down upon the high road quite spent, and almost senseless. He lay there all night, not able to move; and was found early the next morning by a carter from his own town, who acted the part of the good Samaritan by poor Thomas, got him a little wine to drink, and then placed him in his

own cart, and took him home. But the blow of death was struck, and it was clear that his end was drawing near. His wife, instead of getting proper medical advice, tried first one thing, and then another, mentioned by her neighbours; but these gave no relief, indeed only increased the complaint. At last she was persuaded to send for a doctor. He no sooner saw him than he said it was beyond human skill to prolong his life many days. When Martha heard this, she burst into the most violent expressions of sorrow; saying she was sure she could never survive him; and what a shame it was, that he who had led so good a life, should have met with so much trouble; it was her daughter's seducer who had brought him to his grave, and she would be revenged on him, that she would. Thomas stretched out his feeble hand towards her, and said, "Oh, Martha, if you wish that we should meet again in heaven, join your prayers with mine, that God will give you a new heart, and create a right spirit within you. Do not, I entreat you, say I have had one trouble more than I deserve; or dare to

accuse God as the author of our affliction. He gave us all things richly to enjoy. He granted us children as a blessing, and we have only ourselves to blame that they have become a curse. Had we brought them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and early taught them to love God with all their hearts, they might have delighted in holiness, and found their greatest happiness in the path of duty. Our poor William would then have found no pleasure amongst the wicked; and Mary would have been shocked by the company of a libertine. Alas! we have been guilty of the sin of Eli; we saw our children do wickedly, and we restrained them not. 'Oh! God, lay not this sin to our charge, when Thou callest us to judgment; pardon us for the sake, and through the merits of my Redeemer; and visit not, I implore Thee, the sins of the fathers upon the children; but snatch my poor girl as a brand from the burning; oh! cast her not away body and soul!'"

Thomas sank back in his chair, quite spent with the effort he had made, and he grew daily

weaker and weaker. His humility was deep, his piety exalted, his faith was ardent, and his love unbounded. When he spoke of earthly things, a degree of anxiety would sometimes cloud his face; but when he fixed his thoughts upon eternity, all was hope, and joy, and peace. He felt, indeed, that he had no merits of his own to plead before the throne of God, and that by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified in his sight; but his trust was in the Rock of Ages. His Saviour was the anchor of his soul, both sure and steadfast. The clergyman who visited him had just given him the sacrament, and never was that sacred ordinance given to one less trusting in his own righteousness. His wife, the clergyman, and I stood round the bed. Thomas seemed for some time in prayer; suddenly we saw his countenance change; and a slight convulsion pass over his features. He looked at each of us, and said, with a heavenly smile, "I believe I am going, but it is not hard to die; my Saviour has deprived death of its sting." His wife took his hand—he pressed hers gently, raised his

eyes, and his lips moved. We thought he prayed for her; and oh! may the prayer be accepted! His breath grew short, and stopped at intervals; his eyes closed, and his hand fell from that of his wife. We thought the spirit was returned to Him who gave it; but suddenly a heavenly joy overspread his face, he tried to raise his hands, and his lips moved; I stooped to hear his voice, and heard him faintly utter, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." The soul ascended with this prayer on high; the head sank upon the pillow; the heart ceased to beat; and all was over. We stood for a few moments, silent as if fearing to disturb the parting spirit. I then laid my hand on that of Martha, and said, "May we die the death of the righteous, and may our last end be like his."

THE WORD OF WARNING.

I HAD known Hannah Smith many years; and always thought her a civil, good-tempered woman; not willing, however, to give herself much trouble about anything, but, like many other people, resolved to get through the world as easily as she could. Her husband was a quiet, sober man; he was not very fond of work, and never thought it needful to lay anything by against a time of sickness; but was quite content if he and his family could live, as it were, from hand to mouth. The consequence was, that whenever Hannah was ill, she was without many of the comforts which women like her require; or if trade went ill and work was scarce, James Smith and his family were sure to suffer greater distress than such of their neighbours as had acted with more prudence. If this want of care, however, had affected only their worldly concerns, perhaps I should not have given you any

account of it; but it was equally hurtful to their eternal interests, nay, a thousand times more so, inasmuch as the soul is a thousand times more valuable than the body. Had you seen their poor children, your heart would have pitied them, brought up as they were in ignorance, and, therefore, in sin. Whenever you passed that way, you were sure to see some of them playing idle games in the street, dirty and ragged. A kind lady once gave two of the elder ones some cast-off clothes, and called upon Hannah, and begged she would send them to the Sunday-school, which Hannah very readily promised to do; and she kept her word for two or three Sundays: but afterwards, on the Saturday evenings, when she should have been getting their clothes ready for the next day, she was gossipping with her neighbours; and in the morning, when she should have washed the children and sent them to school, she was in bed. Besides which, the things were soon run through, as Hannah suffered the children to wear them every day, and a small hole soon became a large one, for want of a stitch in time to prevent it. In

"Surrounded with poverty and dirt." —PAGE 47.

short, the Smiths were a family whom it was in vain to think of helping, for they would not be at the trouble to help themselves.

Now Hannah could read very well, therefore she knew she was not living as she ought to do; and sometimes when I have called upon her, and pointed out the condemnation which was pronounced upon the unprofitable servant in the parable, because he had neglected to improve the one talent committed to his care, she has assured me she really intended to turn over a new leaf, and as soon as she and her husband could get clothes to appear decent in, they intended to go to church. That time, however, as you may suppose, never came, and so they continued to go on in the old way from Sabbath to Sabbath, and from year to year. Some time ago I went to visit some friends at a distance from home, and on my return heard that poor Hannah Smith had been six weeks confined to her bed very ill, and that she was not expected to recover. I went to visit her, and was grieved to find her destitute of all those little comforts which are necessary in sickness, and surrounded

with poverty and dirt. But on approaching the bed of the poor woman, I felt still more for the sufferings of her mind than of her body. Her eye was hollow, her voice was feeble, and her face careworn. She put out her hand as I came near, and exclaimed, "Oh! that I had taken your advice, and served God in the days of my health, but now it is too late: you see what I am come to, and the doctor tells me I cannot get better. God summons me to judgment, and what shall I do? what shall I do?" "Hannah," I replied, "it would be cruelty to flatter you with false hopes at a time like this; you must know that you are a miserable sinner; that you have done those things which you ought not to have done, and left undone those things which you ought to have done, and there is no health in you." "Oh! I know it," she exclaimed, "I know it; I have been a slothful and unprofitable servant. I have broken God's Sabbath, neglected my Bible, and lived almost without prayer. I have suffered my poor children to grow up in ignorance and sin, and now God will bear with me no longer. He calls me to give

an account of my stewardship, and what will become of my soul!" "Be thankful," I replied, "that God allows you any space for repentance. Cast yourself at the feet of the Saviour, who died for sinners; for there is no other name given among men whereby you can be saved. Implore Him to grant you true repentance and his Holy Spirit, and earnestly pray God to pardon your sins through his atoning blood. But I would advise you to send for a clergyman, who will direct you much better than I can."

Hannah did so, and Mr. P. kindly visited her often; he prayed with her, and for her, and directed her to look for salvation through the merits of her Redeemer alone, and assured her He would in no wise cast out them who came unto Him in penitence and faith. For some weeks, however, Hannah's distress of mind continued. Her constant language, whenever I visited her, was, "Oh! do you think I may venture to hope? Do you think the Saviour will accept of me? Can there be mercy for me, for me who have sinned against light, who have stifled the checks of my conscience, who have done despite unto the

Spirit of Grace? Oh!" she exclaimed, "if the righteous can scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" Believing poor Hannah truly penitent, I read to her such portions of Scripture as I thought best suited to afford her comfort and hope; and at length she seemed to get comfort. "Oh!" she said, "how gracious are the invitations of God to the vilest sinner to return to Him; how free are his offers of mercy." Again and again she entreated me to read those passages which speak of the mercy of God in Christ Jesus, of the atonement He has made, and the complete redemption which He has purchased for us.

Whenever her neighbours came to see her, she exhorted them to "seek the Lord while He may be found." She told them the agony of mind she had suffered, but that she now trusted that God would pardon her; and assured them if it were the will of God, she would rather depart and be with Christ than be restored again to health, and enjoy all the pleasures which this world can afford. Poor Hannah lingered thirteen weeks upon a bed of sickness,

and then, to the surprise of every one, her disorder took a favourable turn, and she began to recover. But, my dear readers, it is truly painful to me to relate the rest. As her health returned, her fears of death and a judgment to come grew fainter and fainter. She became by degrees less frequent in prayer, and as she was more engaged in worldly concerns, her hopeful state of mind abated. Her want of decent clothes, in which to attend public worship, again furnished her with an excuse for becoming a Sabbath-breaker. Her old tempers and habits returned with full force, her good resolutions were forgotten, and, in short, Hannah Smith soon lived the same careless, unholy life she did before her illness!

Oh! my dear readers, let us learn from this an awful lesson, let us learn the danger of trusting to a death-bed repentance. A time will come when we shall wish every day of our lives had been devoted to the service of our Redeemer. Thousands, I fear, will awake in anguish who have closed their eyes in seeming peace. Had Hannah Smith died at the time

her friends expected, they would have pronounced her death happy, and have said that she had entered into rest. Far be it from me to presume to set bounds to the mercy of the Almighty: but reflect a moment, and ask yourselves this serious question:—Had she then died, would you have wished your souls in the place of hers? I am sure you would not. Then do not, I entreat you, risk your eternal happiness or misery upon so fearful a hazard. The consciousness of sin, the fear of death, and the dread of an eternity of woe, may well strike terror to the hardest heart, but terror is not repentance.

Let us pray that we may not be amongst the number of those who fatally deceive themselves. Let us work out our salvation with fear and trembling. Let us labour diligently to fulfil the duties of our stations in life, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, that whether we be allowed time for preparation, or whether the day of the Lord come upon us as a thief in the night, we may be found watching, and then our gracious Saviour Himself assures

us, "Blessed is that servant whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. Of a truth I say unto you, that he will make him ruler over all that he hath."

I left the God of truth and light,
  I left the God who gave me breath,
To wander in the wilds of night,
  And perish in the snares of death.

Sweet was his service, and his yoke
  Was light and easy to be borne;
Through all the bonds of love I broke,
  I cast away his gift with scorn.

I danced in folly's giddy maze,
  And drank the sea, or chased the wind;
But falsehood lurked in all my ways,
  My laughter left remorse behind.

Heart-broken, friendless, poor, cast down,
  Where shall the chief of sinners fly,
Almighty vengeance, from Thy frown?
  Eternal justice, from Thine eye?

Lo, through the gloom of guilty fears,
  My faith discerns a dawn of grace;
The Sun of Righteousness appears,
  In Jesus' reconciling face.

My suffering, slain, and risen Lord,
In sore distress I turn to Thee;
I claim acceptance on Thy Word;
My God, my God, forsake not me.

Prostrate before Thy mercy-seat,
I dare not, if I would, despair;
None ever perished at Thy feet,
And I will lie for ever there.

"The man was at that time in the hospital."—PAGE 55.

PEACE IN BELIEVING.

THE case of G—w and his family was brought under the notice of a district society in London, for the relief of the poor. The man who had been suffering under a most painful complaint for a long period, was at that time in the hospital; and his wife and children were left without any means of support. The poor woman was in the deepest affliction; and this, with her appearance and manners, very different to what are usually met with in cases of such extreme need, much interested the visitor. He tried to get her a little needlework among his friends; and it was about the 30th of March when the writer of this narrative first saw her. I was much pleased with her, and the short conversation that passed while she stayed. I was struck, not only with her appearance, which was very clean and neat, but with the strong affection she expressed for her husband

and children; her deep anxiety for his spiritual welfare; her eagerness to do anything towards their support; and an air of simplicity, honesty, and frankness in all she said. It was late in the evening when she first called. Her husband had just been discharged from the hospital, and had been brought home, as she said, "to die." When an inquiry was made as to the state of his soul, she burst into tears; and replied, that was her greatest trouble; for she feared all was not quite right. She said he was satisfied, but she was not. She had long wished him to see and converse with some one about the concerns of his soul, but she could not prevail on him to do so. She had been convinced for some time that neither her husband nor herself were in the right way, and the thought of his dying in that state made her miserable. He was now, she said, delirious and much convulsed; and she feared he would not live till the morning. Being at that time confined with a severe cold, I could not promise to call on her the next day; but I desired her to lay all her trouble before God in prayer; to

seek of Him the salvation of her husband's soul; and, referring her to some of those encouraging promises recorded in Scripture for those who prayed to Him in faith, I gave her the tract entitled, "The Sinner's Help," and directed her, if her husband recovered so as to be able to attend to it, to read that to him, and also the third chapter of the Gospel of St. John.

She came again the next evening. She said her husband had been delirious all night; but in the first gleam of reason she had read to him the little tract, which he then asked for, and would not let it go from him again. He had put it under his pillow, and she had seen it in his hands again and again throughout the day. He could read a little, but not well. She could not yet prevail on him to see any one to converse with him. I then gave her a volume of short sermons, and a short tract on prayer; and directed her to read to him the thirty-second Psalm, and some others, and still encouraged her to trust in God, and to pour out her heart in prayer before Him.

I called at their lodging on the 31st of March. G—w was somewhat revived, had dressed himself, and was trying to cut out some work for his wife to make up in part of payment for their rent. Hearing a footstep, he had hastily exchanged his nightcap for his hat, as his wife afterwards told me, and from underneath this he looked at me with no very friendly air. To all I said he only replied "yes" or "no," except this one sentence, "We shall all get rid of our troubles by and by." He was obliged through weakness to sit down, and listen to a conversation, in which he would take no part, while I addressed his wife, and tried to arrest his attention through the remarks I made to her. His manner was cold and repulsive, and he showed no civility, either when I entered or when I departed. His wife, however, called on me afterwards, and told me his mind was uneasy, and that he was very willing to let anyone read to him. He also read the tracts himself: still, she said, she was sure all was not right.

I went to him again on the 6th of April,

from which time he kept his bed. He now listened to all I said with real interest; attended to the Scriptures I selected for reading, and after a short prayer offered up in his behalf, expressed his thanks very warmly and gratefully. The subjects of our conversation this day were chiefly these: The first and great commandment, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind;" that God could not be loved until He was known; that He is only known in, and by, and through Christ Jesus; that when we know Christ, apprehend our interest in Him, see our sins forgiven for his sake, we begin to love God, and not before; that when we thus believe in Christ, and love God, we also begin to frame our lives to please Him; and that it is in this way the man is formed anew. I showed him how true faith sanctifies; and in this and every visit enforced the need of constant prayer to God for the Spirit, by whose help alone the soul could receive any spiritual light or life.

I found the G—ws had no Bible of their own; they had borrowed their landlady's each time they had wanted to read in it. A Bible marked in many parts was sent them, and for this gift G—w soon learnt to be thankful. One day, when talking with his wife, he expressed to her his fear respecting his state. He said there was no hope for him; he had lived so long without prayer; it was too late for him to pray now. He said he would give thousands to know the Scriptures, and to be able to pray. Soon after this, his little girl (who went for a short time to a day-school) said, "Father, let me take this Bible to school with me." "Child," he replied, "you do not know what you are asking for; if you take away that book you take my life. I would not part with it for the world."

But much as we were pleased with the change in his manners, his gratitude, his eager desire for prayer, and to have the Scripture read to him, there did not appear those decided marks of a change of heart which would have removed all anxiety about him.

It was not until after the Rev. Mr. G—— had visited him twice that G—w appeared to possess a settled, well-founded peace. One night he awoke from his sleep, and said to his wife, he felt on his mind a something he could not express. When she inquired what he meant, he said he had been dreaming of heaven. "Ah," she replied, "you may dream of heaven, but unless you turn to the Lord, and seek Him more earnestly than you have yet done, you will never get there." He cried, "Oh! my mind is greatly burdened. Oh! that I could open my heart to some one."

The next day a friend called on him, and urged the necessity of prayer, secret and fervent prayer to God, saying, "You must not be satisfied with trusting and listening to the prayers of others for you, you must earnestly pray to God yourself." After this friend left him, G—w told his wife to leave him alone. She did so; and while out of the room, she heard him pouring out his heart to God in prayer—the first time she had ever known him

do so aloud. That evening the Rev. Mr. G—— happened to call on G—w, and conversed with him for a long time, and during this interview he said to Mr. G—— that he felt the love of God so strong in his heart that he could not describe it. It was from this time that he seemed to enjoy a settled peace; and there could not be a doubt that he was freely and simply resting on Christ.

G—w used often to say to his wife, "Had I died a few months back, I should have been lost;" and "had it not been for God's people, I should have perished both body and soul." He used sometimes to express his surprise at the change he had experienced; at the degree of light which had flowed into his mind. He seemed amazed at his new ideas; and, indeed, altogether, he said, he felt he was a very different creature from what he had been before.

If the change in his own views and feelings was a wonder to himself, the change in his very look was no less so to all who were in the habit of visiting him. This, indeed, was so striking that it was noticed by the surgeon before

alluded to. He mentioned one day to a friend, with some surprise, what a change had taken place in the countenance of G—w. The repulsive look, the suspicious glance, the cold and sullen gloom, had all passed away, and had given place to an eye full of life and hope, and an expression of peace and tranquillity that seemed to spread over all his features; and yet not simply peace, for it was pleasure, enjoyment—the man looked happy. And this was the more striking, because, as the surgeon said, his sufferings were very great. He never uttered a single complaint, nor, indeed, at any time made the least allusion to his bodily sufferings. His wife sometimes spoke of his cough tearing him to pieces; but G—w never complained.

On the 2nd of August, the sacrament was administered to him, according to desire, by the Rev. Mr. P. When the service was ended, he begged that all would leave the room. They did so, when to their surprise, he broke out into a song of praise, saying "Hallelujah!"

When he had done singing, he was heard pouring out his heart in prayer. After some

time, they entered the room again, and G—w calling his wife to him, Mr. P. said, "You had better let her rest a little; she is quite worn out." He answered, "I have only one word to say," and then told her he should leave her the next morning at six o'clock. And this he repeated many times that evening. He dozed throughout the night; but each time he awoke from his slumber, he said, slightly lifting up his hand, "mind six o'clock." Once, as she wept over him, he said, "Do not pity me; to-morrow I shall be with the angels, looking down with pity upon you." At six o'clock he awoke, and calling to her, he told her to draw near to him; she did so; he then threw his arms round her neck and neither moved nor breathed again.

THE TRUE LIGHT.

THE writer of this little memoir was requested by a friend to call on a poor man, in the last stage of a decline, though his mind was still full of vigour. We found him in a most awful state indeed, both as to mind and body. He talked of a supreme being, a God of mercy, but ridiculed several parts of the Old Testament, and even went so far as to deny that Jesus Christ was the Son of God!

After this first visit, we often went to see him, for though it seemed difficult at first to know how to proceed with one who boasted of his unbelief, who could cavil at every verse, we knew that God is all-sufficient, and that his power is shown in perfect weakness. Finding when we entered the cottage the second time, that it contained a Bible, a chapter was read to him. Afterwards we selected sometimes part of one, or else detached verses as the conversation

"He was then working on the Thames."—PAGE 67.

who spread this deadly poison among his crew.

Poor G.'s mind being once perverted, he soon became a ringleader among an infidel crew, and unsettled many a weaker seaman's half-established notions of religion, which became a source of painful regret to him during the hours of sickness and on his death-bed.

"You cannot describe me too bad," he often said, when looking back upon his past life, though drunkenness seems to have been his chief sin. After a course of years spent in profaneness and vice, he was forced at last to give up work. This he had persevered in, long after he was very unfit to do so, rather than apply to the parish. He was then working on the Thames, when the state of his health compelled him to desist. "My character," he told us, "was so well known (for I seldom worked when I had a shilling in my pocket), that for a long while they refused me any help whatever."

Books were lent to him, but "Baxter's Call," "Alleine's Alarm," and a few of that de-

scription, were returned unread, as he owned before he died. At the third or fourth visit that was paid him, several bad pamphlets were lying on the table. A fear was expressed to his wife on going away that these took up more of his time than he would bestow on more useful reading. This was most likely repeated to him, for soon after he owned unasked that these very works were of a mischievous tendency, and improper for a man not likely to recover, which he knew was his state. He assured us they had been returned to the owner; and should not be admitted again under his roof. We believe he kept his word, for nothing of the kind was ever seen again. Nearly three weeks before his death, one morning while he was alone and reading the "Reclaimed Infidel" in the "Friendly Visitor," the thought arose in his mind, "I wonder if I was to go to Christ now, whether He would yet receive me." "I prayed," he said, "that if it was not too late, Christ would accept me, when all at once my sins rushed upon my mind with such a weight that my poor heart fell. For some time the agony

of mind I endured was such that none of the sufferings of my body ever equalled it. This conviction of sin impressed my mind for more than two hours, I thought I must be dying, yet my body was just then at perfect ease, and my cough was much less troublesome than it had been. It was impossible, I knew, to recall the past, though I earnestly wished I could; so I set about repairing, in some measure, the mischief of my former life. From one friend for whom I sent and who on entering offered me some drink, which cut me to the very soul, I extorted a promise that he would go to church. He objected at first because of his large family; and his long absence from a place of worship. I entreated him to make a beginning, and to be sure and go next Sunday, for, perhaps, the minister might say something to him to open his eyes as the Lord has opened mine.

"I had for a long time been at variance with some of my relations, but chiefly my mother, with whom I had not been on terms for more than twelve years, so I sent for them.

I felt I could not say my Saviour's prayer, 'Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us,' with an unrelenting mind." On the same occasion he took the Bible, which lay on his bed, and holding it up between both his hands, the big tears trickling down his cheeks, he said, with much emotion, nor was it possible to hear him make such a confession without being very greatly affected, "This book, which I have read many times on purpose to deride it, I now believe to be the Word of God. The Lord's mercy must, indeed, be unbounded since He has revealed Himself to me, for though my sins have been very black, He enables me to say with the man in the gospel, 'Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.'

"Now let me do a little bit of good before I die." Then, taking his leathern purse from under his pillow, he added, after drawing out sixpence, "I had saved this to buy some tobacco, but I read in the 'Friendly Visitor' of a poor blind girl, who brought thirty shillings to the

collector for missionaries, so I determined to give it to you for the benefit of poor sailors."

One night, before this change took place, how long he could not recollect, as he laid himself down in his bed, he uttered some such prayer as this, "O God, as I cannot of myself believe the things that are contained in the Bible, if they are really true, give me thy Holy Spirit to make me believe them." He that searcheth the hearts, and knoweth the mind of the Spirit, beheld the sincerity which dictated this prayer, and He who never rejected a single suppliant fervently suing for mercy, was graciously pleased to answer it in his own appointed time.

One thing which helped in no small degree to effect a change in G.'s ideas, as he owned himself, was the desertion of the friends of his jovial days, while mere strangers, led by Christian charity, sought him out and visited him so often.

He was much impressed with an anxious desire to reclaim some of his former friends, whom he had misled: tears of repentance were

shed by him several times over this painful thought. "My wife's mind, too, I tried to poison more than once, but she has shown herself wiser than I was. I hope she will forgive me." She was herself present at this conversation.

Upon being asked if he placed all his hope of pardon and salvation on his Saviour, he replied, "Yes, I do; I have no other hope, I cannot be tempted to look to my own deeds."

During one visit, the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah was read and explained to him by a clergyman. A review of this and several texts marked in his Bible formed the chief employment of his last day on earth. At night, his two little girls, by his own desire, knelt close to his bed and repeated their prayers. He then blessed them, and commended them to that God who is a father to the fatherless, and before morning his spirit had fled. He was seized with a sudden fit of coughing, which carried him off in an instant.

Let us here remark that the hand of God so long forgotten by G. through a most sinful

career, was at the eleventh hour owned with thankfulness. He acknowledged with gratitude his most merciful escape at the taking of Walcheren, when a cannon-ball missed him, merely from his bending down his head. How many impenitent sinners besides this poor man are living monuments of the patience and goodness of God towards his very enemies. What cause was there here to cry out, "The Lord hath done great things for me, whereof I am glad!" Yet, the danger past, he said, "I rose with a whistle, and thought not once of Him who had diverted the blow." It may also be mentioned that he was wounded on several occasions, once in the head; and that once he fell overboard, drunk, when his life was most miraculously preserved through the courage and presence of mind of his captain. This accident he related with the warmest feeling of gratitude only two days before he died.

Justly ought we to admire the patient forbearance and lovingkindness of the Lord. Let us say with the Psalmist, "Many are thy wonderful works which Thou hast done, and thy

thoughts to us-ward: they are more than can be numbered." May every one into whose hands this account may fall, seek the Lord while it is called to-day, and rejoice in Him; and may all who love his salvation say continually, "The Lord be magnified."

THIS HAST THOU CHOSEN.

No difference of circumstances, situation, or rank in life can make any alteration whatever in the authority of the Word of God. To "the king on his throne, and to the beggar on the dung-hill," to the moral and amiable, as well as to the openly daring sinner, Jesus says, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." And thus when a course of religious profession is entered upon, the rules given by our blessed Saviour apply to all alike. To him who is naturally kind, charitable, and liberal, as well as to him who is covetous, hoarding, niggardly; to the temperate, as well as the lover of pleasure, Jesus again says, "if any man will come after me, let him deny himself." Now I am afraid that this is a rule little thought of in this day of profession; and it is the neglect of it which makes so many unsound professors, so

many stony and thorny-ground hearers, so many of whom we are obliged to say that we "stand in doubt" of them, whether they are for Christ or against Him; and so many more who end with turning their backs upon the religion which they had taken up too hastily, and are found at last among the open enemies of Christ.

There is a cost in religion, and a cost that must be counted by those who would endure unto the end. And that cost is "Deny thyself." Now there are many appearances of self-denial, which will not stand the test. A person may go very far in denying himself, and yet may "keep back part of the price;" and therefore all that he has given up will "profit him nothing." It is the favourite pursuit, the darling pleasure, the secret reserve that the Lord calls for when He gives this command; and it is the giving up of this above the rest that is the proof of a heart right with God. Probably our Saviour would not have required the young man, of whom it is read, that "Jesus beholding him, loved him," to have sold all that he had, and given to the poor, if anything short of this

could have proved the sincerity of his heart. But to prefer anything to God, to be able to withstand the checks and prickings of conscience, rather than deal honestly with ourselves, to set a higher price upon some earthly good than upon Him "in whose favour is life," is to rob God of his glory, to dethrone Him from our hearts, and to prove that our profession is such as will not stand in the great day.

A. L. was nearly grown up, when her mind underwent a very great change. She was deeply impressed under the preaching of the Gospel, and became extremely earnest about her soul. Her Bible was opened and read, and prayed over. She often shed tears at the remembrance of her past life, and appeared to know many a hard conflict with the indwelling sin of her heart. And her religion was not hid in a corner. She seemed anxious to do what she could for God, and became a regular attendant at the table of her Lord. She was not ashamed of joining herself to the people of God, and of separating from those worldly pursuits in which before she thought there was

no harm, and though she was never forward to let everybody know that she was become different to what she had been, yet I do not think that she would have been ashamed of confessing Christ before scoffers, if she had been called upon to do it.

Thus did A. L. go on for some years—a steady, consistent, painstaking professor. But her road had hitherto for the most part been smooth and plain. She was now to be put to the test. The Lord in the course of his providence said to her, "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself." She made acquaintance with a young man in the village, and allowed herself to continue the acquaintance until it grew into a strong attachment, although there seemed nothing in him to attract her, but the prospect of a little of this world's glitter, and he was living altogether without God in the world, and in utter carelessness about his soul. He did not even scruple to express his doubts as to the truth of the Bible; and though from fear of losing her affection, he refrained from scoffing at religion, the real

"Until it grew into a strong attachment."—PAGE 78.

enmity of his heart to godliness was too plain to be hid.

Poor girl! Perhaps the wretchedness of an awakened conscience struggling to be heard, was never more sharply felt! It was impossible that she could be happy while she was sinning against her God, and turning her back upon him. Conscience must have often said to her, "What hast thou to do with peace?" Yet though she confessed that this was the case with her, nothing could turn her from her purpose.

She was mad upon the idol which she had set up in her heart, and began to find out all sorts of reasons why she should accept the offer which was made to her. The comfort that her parents would feel in seeing her happily settled in life, their approbation of her choice, and the pleasure she would find in helping them—these were some of the sad worldly reasons that she gave for encouraging his acquaintance.

I need hardly say that her choice gave the greatest pain to her friends. They did not indeed fail to warn her most affectionately of

the danger into which she was rushing, but she received their advice very coldly, and avoided every opening for its being repeated. Her minister, to whom she had been always ready to open her mind, when she wanted counsel, set before her in the strongest light the sin which she was indulging; that in yoking herself to an unbeliever, she was flying in the face of God, and in thus sowing unto the flesh, "could only expect of the flesh to reap corruption." But all that could be said was in vain. She had, she said, made it a matter of prayer, that she might be made the means of his conversion, that though she feared he had not yet felt the great change, yet he was well-disposed, and had expressed a wish for instruction; that he was too kind to oppose her, and had, indeed, promised never to interfere with her in religion, until he came to think as she did.

Thus poor A. L. reasoned, the victim of the desperate deceitfulness of a heart left to itself. She could not give up all for Christ. She could not say, "What have I to do any more with idols?" She made her choice, and

shortly after was married. But hers was not the union of two persons who might hope to "dwell together as heirs of the grace of life." The real truth, to which before she was utterly blinded, too soon showed itself. Her little labours of love, one after another, were given up to please her husband. For the same reason she forsook the Lord's table, and by degrees became satisfied with attendance upon church once a day. The weekly lecture, where, before this unhappy period, she had seldom been missed in her place, was entirely given up. The decline in the spiritual affections of her first love was plain from the attempt she had been making to serve the Lord with a divided heart.

Perhaps, however, the worst symptom about her was her unwillingness to confess that she had done wrong. When her pious friends went to see her she expressed no doubts, no misgivings, but used the same language of religion as before. When she spoke of herself, it was in a very general way, "How cold and dead she felt, and how much unbelief she had,"

without asking her own heart, "is there not a cause?"

But her friends heard from other quarters that this "backslider in heart" was beginning to "be filled with her own ways." It was more than suspected that her husband's affections were cooled towards her, and the unsteadiness of his conduct made their worldly prospects doubtful. Indeed, she was known to have confessed to others, what she was careful to conceal from those whom she was afraid to face, that she was not happy with him. "Such must have trouble in the flesh," where the Gospel rule is broken—"Only in the Lord" (1 Cor. vii. 39).

About a twelvemonth after her marriage, her husband and she left the village, and though I have made many inquiries after her, I have never been able to hear any tidings of her, and probably never shall, until I meet her at the bar of God.

And what shall I say further of A. L.? She seems to remind me of our Saviour's declaration—"Whosoever will save his life shall

lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the Gospel's, the same shall save it."

Poor A. L. was once a flourishing professor of godliness. But her desire to escape the cross led her to step aside into by-paths, brought discredit upon her profession, proved a stumbling-block to the weak, and caused her best friends to stand in doubt of the reality of the work of grace in her heart. If she does not come short at last, she "seems to come short." Her graces are dull, her evidences are clouded, and many precious opportunities of glorifying her God, and of enlivening her fellow-christians are lost to her. One cannot help asking, "Where is the blessedness she spake of?" Where is the comfort of her religion? Where is her "peace and joy in believing?" Her minister, who in earlier times used to feel his soul quickened and refreshed by communion with her, does not remember to have received one ray of comfort into his heart from his latter intercourse with her. He always came from her latterly with this anxious

inquiry respecting her, "Are the consolations of God small with thee? Is there any secret thing with thee?" Then, too, how many crosses has she laid in her own way by avoiding the cross of Christ?

My hope for her is this, that the afflictions and trials which most probably are her lot through life, may prove the rough and thorny way in which this wandering sheep will be brought back to the fold; and oh! may her history be the means of strengthening some weak and wavering soul in choosing and continuing in the straight and narrow path which leadeth to life eternal!

Breathe thoughts of pity o'er a brother's fall,
But dwell not with stern anger on his fault;
The grace of God alone holds thee, holds all;
Were that withdrawn, thou, too, wouldst swerve
and halt.

GRACE SUMMERS.

WHAT a blessing it is that the grace of God may shine as brightly in a poor person as in a rich one. It does not want riches or scholarship to set it off. Not but that when a rich or learned person becomes religious it is a matter of great thankfulness to Him who made him so, because of the good that he may be the means of doing with his money and his scholarship. They are his talents which his Lord has given him to trade with, and to employ for his glory. Some have their ten talents, some their five. And they have them with this command, "Occupy till I come." Make the best of them, do not waste, do not misuse them, I shall require an account to be given of all when I come, how your money, your time, your learning, your opportunities have been used, and what good you have done with them. You remember in the parable that explains this sub-

ject (Matt. xxv. 14; Luke xix. 12) that one of the servants had only one talent given to him, and he, instead of trading with it, went and digged in the earth, and hid his Lord's money. I suppose he did not think it worth while to try and make anything of so small a sum. If he had had five or ten talents, like the rest, something might have been done with it; but what was the use of so little as one talent?

Is not the conduct of this slothful servant very like that of a great many amongst us? When we hear every day, "Oh! I am no scholar, I can't be expected to know, as they who can read," or "I'm a poor body, I've nothing to give to others, I've enough to do to mind my family. It is for the rich to do for others; it's what they ought to do." Now, are not such persons guilty of hiding their Lord's money in the earth?

I am going to tell you of one who did not do this, though she might have made all these excuses, and many more besides. She was poor, I have seldom seen any one poorer; she had a sickly husband, and a large young family, so

that she had to work very hard for their support, and all little enough to keep out of debt, which, however, she managed so strictly to do, that it was commonly said, "anybody will trust Mrs. Summers, she always pays for everything."

But what I mean to prove from her story is, that a poor person may glorify God and adorn the Gospel as much as a rich one. Yes, and a poor person too, who has not a farthing to give away, may be as charitable as one who gives hundreds of pounds.

Grace Summers possessed that which, in spite of her poverty, made her rich. She had the grace of God in her heart, and it shone brightly in her life. She had felt the love of her Saviour in dying for her, and that love "constrained her to live, not unto herself, but unto Him who died for her and rose again." I told you before that she had a large young family. Now here was an excuse for her to say, "I can't be so strict as I would—I can't keep my church so well as I would with such a great family as mine." But this was not her way; she would say, "God has sent me a great family, and sure

I, if anybody, should seek an Almighty friend to help me to bring them up in the right way; I should, more than many, watch against their being hindrances in my journey to heaven." And one way in which she watched, was by taking care that they did not keep her from the house of God. Though she lived a mile from the church, and the path was by no means good, I have often seen her there with six of her children. I know many mothers find it very hard to keep their children quiet at church, and, therefore, they give it up, and say, "I had better stay at home than disturb my neighbours by carrying my child—he won't be quiet, all I can do." Now, I do not think that Mrs. Summer's children were born with better, or more quiet tempers than others, but they were very early taught to mind their parent's word. Not that Grace was severe with them, she did not use herself to strike them. No doubt she had her full share of trials with them, but she did not add to her trials as many do by her own foolish indulgence of them. I always thought her to be a wise Christian mother, and Christian order

as well as Christian godliness was the mark of her house. It was pretty, too, to see how nicely the little ones were put under the care of the biggest girl; how she was taught to be very kind to them, and not short and cross, and they were made to mind all she said to them.

But I said, a poor person who had nothing to give away, might be very charitable. Charity is not only giving away money, and food, and clothing (because the Bible tells us that a man may give all his goods to feed the poor, and yet not have charity), and, therefore, it does not only belong to rich people. If you turn to 1 Cor. xiii. 3—7, you will see that charity suffereth long and is kind, that it envieth not, that it seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, endureth all things. Now, read the whole of these verses carefully, and you will see that a poor person, possessed of true grace, may put in practice all these acts of charity as well as the rich. Grace Summers did so in a degree that often surprised and humbled me. She was not one who was in the habit of saying, "It's best to keep myself to myself. There is

so much talk and envying that I think it best not to neighbour with anybody. I'm sure I should be ready to do a good turn for any of them, but it is an unthankful office." This is the language of a selfish heart, and she had been taught to look not on her own things, but also on the things of others. The neighbour who lived under her roof was a swearing, abusive woman, who with her daughter was a great trial to her. Whether from envy at Grace's good character in the place, or from offence taken at her reproving the daughter for swearing, it was their delight to load her with reproach. They would often set open their door, and sit close to hers, to vex her with their profane and ungodly talk. But did she return evil for evil? No, she heaped kindness, like coals of fire, on their heads.

The daughter was afflicted with a long illness, most cruelly neglected by her unfeeling parent, and who was it that came to her bedside, that made her gruel, got nice things for her from the neighbours, read to her, talked to her, and, I verily believe, prayed for her? It

was Grace, and though her mother showed no regard to her kindness, and even the daughter soon after returned the same ill-will as before, yet she made this ungrateful behaviour no reason why on the very next occasion she should not be as ready as ever to help them in their trouble.

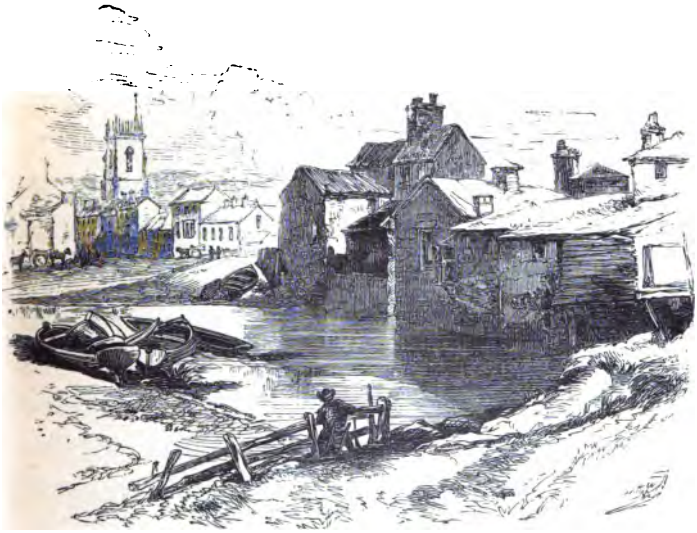
The same conduct was shown to other neighbours under the same circumstances of vexation and abuse. Often, indeed, has she come down to her minister to tell him of some case of sickness or distress which had not come to his knowledge, or to beg or to tell what was most needed. Her rule was to do good to all, especially to them that are of the household of faith, for while she felt for all about her, she loved and closely joined herself with the people of God.

But I must speak something of her faith. Indeed, what I have said already of her love and charity has proved her faith, for faith worketh by love, and by works of love is made perfect. I mean, however, particularly her faith in the care and providence of her God. Know-

ing God as her Father in his dear Son, that He had spared not this Son for her, she was assured that with Him also He would freely give her all things. Grace was commonly reckoned, as I have mentioned, one of the poorest women in the parish, and yet, though she must often have found it a hard struggle to get on, I never once saw her cast down.

One day she said, "I don't think you can know what faith is, as I do; you have not the same opportunities of believing in the care of God as I have; you don't know what it is to have a family about you, and not a bit of bread in the cupboard, and not to see a single way where the next meal can come from. Yet it has never made me unhappy. The Lord has always sent me a shilling, and generally when and from where I could least have expected it. I never felt more trust in God than when I have had nothing in the house and nothing to look to."

I remember Mr. Newton somewhere remarks that it is easy to talk of trusting in God when there is bread and cheese in the cupboard, but



"One of the poorest in the parish."—PAGE 92.

Grace had learned really to believe in times of need that the Lord would sooner open a window in heaven for her relief than suffer her to want. Her language was, "My Heavenly Father knoweth that I have need of these things, and, therefore, what occasion is there for me to take any anxious thought, as the world does, what I shall eat, or what I shall drink, or wherewithal I shall be clothed? Let me only seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and surely I have a right to trust that all things shall be added to me."

Now, this is faith. Many begin at the wrong end of the text; they first try "to add all these things," food, clothing, etc., to themselves, and then they intend to seek the kingdom of God. This is not faith. This is worldliness, unbelief, mistrust of God and his promise.

Such was Grace Summers. Happy poverty was the mark of her condition. Her Saviour spake to her in the midst of her many worldly trials: "I know thy poverty, but thou art rich." Looking into her cottage, she seemed to be in

the greatest need; marking her countenance and listening to her conversation you saw that she was in possession of the hidden treasure, "the pearl of great price," "better to her than thousands of gold and silver." Happy Grace! "As having nothing, and yet possessing all things."

THE MOTHER OF THE PARISH.

SARAH B. was married when she was about seventeen years of age, to a farmer of the name of W. A., and came soon after to live in the parish of D., where she remained till her death. She was the mother of several children, three of whom survive her—a son and two daughters. The early life of this true servant of God is little known; nor were the last forty years in which she lived in the parish of D. marked by any singular occurrences, but by such a holy, kind, humane, consistent, and tender conduct towards all around her, that for many years she was justly styled *the mother of the parish.* A neighbour who lived by her twenty years told me, after her death, "Let sickness, sorrow, poverty, wounds, or distress of any kind, come before her, she always had a remedy at hand, or some

kind word or thought whereby to soothe the sufferers."

Her worldly means were at no time very large, and particularly after a time of trial to the farmers, some years ago; but still her charity never failed, and she would cheerfully say to me, "God gives the heart to some, the purse to others; I bless Him He has left me the heart, though He has drawn my means low. I say, that a cup of cold water given to a poor sufferer, with a kind word or a feeling look, is accepted by God. I don't say this merely because the Bible says it, but because when I come home from my poor neighbours, and have had little to give, I feel in my soul that the blessing of God is with me, and there is a joy in my mind such as the purchasing of an estate could not give." She was a woman of more than common strength of mind, had received a good plain education, could read, write, and keep accounts well; but more than this, she was one who, though little taught by human means, studied her own heart, and found the truth of God's word from

all she saw around her, and all she felt within.

She was one who had read her Bible constantly for many years; and though she had never been in the way of early or full instruction on any difficult points, would give her own ideas of various passages, in a way that showed her acquaintance with the word of God to be very deep, and that it was the rule of her whole life and conduct.

When we first knew her she would freely say, "No one can be saved but by Christ;" yet there was evidently, for many years, a want of that full and complete reliance on the Saviour *alone*, which we wished to see. When the "Friendly Visitor" had been published about four years, the numbers were bound, and given to her. She read them through and through, not only to herself, but, as it had for years been her habit to spend her Sunday afternoons, after service, in visiting her poor sick neighbours, she would take the work with her, and read it to them. She often confessed before her death, that though she

had lived a Christian to the extent of her knowledge (and, in our view, no common one), yet she had never fully received Christ as her only refuge, or felt in Him all she needed, till these blessings, as she called them, were put into her hands. A pious friend living near her observed, "Mrs. A. now enjoys in religion what she never did before—she sees Jesus Christ all and in all."

During all the years I visited, and that frequently, this good woman, I can never once recollect her speaking unkindly or disrespectfully of one single person, though I have found from others afterwards that she really had been used ill by some. The most she ever said of a relation who had greatly tried her, was, "He has been thoughtless, but, poor thing, he will see better, through God's mercy."

She was always to be found full of love. Though of so strong a mind, you never witnessed anything like oppression; she was seldom from home but on some errand of love.

One very hot day in harvest, I met Mrs. A.

"I met Mrs. A. riding to an adjoining parish."—PAGE 99.

riding to an adjoining parish, and asked her what called her from home at that season. She named a young person well known to her, and said, "Poor thing, she has sinned, but her friends are too severe; they have turned her off, and I know she frets; so I am on my way to try and comfort her; not to tell her that sin is a small or light thing; no, but to tell her, through all, Jesus Christ can save; He never turns his back; I don't know how it is we ever turn ours; dear me, we are all guilty before God, and I don't see that we should give over our love because a friend has sinned." She had a niece who was reduced in circumstances, who would say, "In all my troubles, Aunt A. has been my support; she never forgets to be kind; she tells me, no bit she has relishes well, if she cannot send some distressed creature a part." To help the poor was her delight; no trouble was too great; her door was always open to them; no farmer is hurt by letting them have a little milk; a bit of butter sold a little cheaper would not be missed, and it is a comfort; so that,

in fact, you seldom went but some poor person called for something. When clothes were to be given away among the poor, she was the first to distribute them, and told me she never gave a new garment till she had first examined the old one, and made them well mend it; for she would observe, "Make them mend well the old, reward them with a new, and you seem to have given them a double blessing."

I have heard her say, "If I have but one penny to lay out, I like to give it them; if I can only gather some herbs, and by preparing them can ease pain, I feel it a comfort, for Jesus Christ did not think it beneath Him to ease pain." There was no illness, night or day, in the parish, but Mrs. A. was there, and she always told her neighbours, "Call me first; if I can do anything, and save the doctor's coming; then, though I have given you no money, perhaps I have saved some."

She would relieve the poor stranger who was in want; and of this she gave

me rather a singular instance. "Some Irishmen called here," she said, "last week, who told me they had food for the night, but had no money to get a bed; they pleaded for a barn; I did not like it; I thought, perhaps you mean to rob me. I thought a bit, then I said, Jesus Christ had not where to lay his head, and He would not turn these strangers away; well, I tell you what, my friends, you shall go into my empty barn, if you are willing to let me have you locked in, and not to go out in the morning till I let you out. To this they cheerfully agreed. I went down to listen, after a little time; I heard the voice of prayer. Ah, I thought, then you will do. I waited till it was over, and found them saying to each other, 'What a loss we have had! Now night comes we miss it; it was you, Tom, who left it under the hedge.' I went in, and asked what they mourned over, supposing it was their supper; but no, it was their Testament: so I went home and sent them one directly."

Her eldest son resided with her after his

marriage, and dying, left his widow, who never left the house.

When her daughter-in-law told Mrs. A. that her own mother got infirm, and she must go and see her, she desired her not only to go and see her, but to fetch her there, telling her that God would never be pleased that her own mother should want her help and not have it. "Let her live here, my child," she said, "and let her be waited on, and do all for her that God would you should, or you will not have his blessing."

She was very infirm a great length of time before her death, and often so unwell as to keep her bed. I asked her on one of these occasions, "How do you feel, Mrs. A.?" She smiled, and added, "Oh, comfortably, very comfortably; I can fairly feel the blessings of God flow down upon me with the moments as they come." "Do you, then, long to depart?" "No, I don't say that; I hardly know why, but I rather say, 'Spare me a little.' I don't seem to want more of the world, but my folks would miss me; and the poor, I like to see them. Just look at that

book (a book of prayers), I am fond of it, and it comforts many a poor neighbour—I hope I always teach them right—I go leaning on the higher help—I often tell them when I leave them, Now, till I come back, pray thus, 'God be merciful to me a sinner.' I felt that in this I could not teach them wrong."

Her death appeared to come on by degrees, without any material illness. She got more and more infirm, till she at length kept her bed. She now began to long to depart, and when I visited her, and asked her if she still wished for life, she said, "No, I have passed through life, and now I look for a better; I wished much to take leave of you before I went home." "You still feel comfortable?" "Yes, very; there lies all my comfort," pointing to the Bible. She then fell asleep, for she kept awake very little at a time. The next and last time I saw her, while she was able to speak, I said, "Mrs. A., it will soon be over with you; tell me where is your hope?" "I see none but the crucified Saviour; glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost." "You do not mention

any of your good or kind actions as your trust." "No, surely; He needs none of our patched-works to mend his whole: I know the Spirit must cleanse; I believe He has taught me to be quite washed; I know what you mean." I said, "It's a great work to die." "Yes; but I don't dread going: it's better to go home; I have had plenty of years here."

To another friend she said, "God bless you, neighbour, and your children." "And God bless you," the neighbour replied. "He does, and I am willing to go to Him, and the Lord be with you, till we meet again."

This neighbour mentioned her death with many tears, saying, "And now she is gone, the village weeps, for such a mother never lived; the whole parish stood in the churchyard to see her committed to the earth."

FAITH AND LOVE.

Mary M. was the daughter of two servants of a widow lady in London, whom they had both faithfully served for several years, and at whose death they married and set up a grocer's shop near Grosvenor Square. But it pleased God to remove them both in a short time from this world, leaving two orphan children, mere babies. There was reason to trust that they died in the Lord; and the little girl Mary appeared to be the peculiar object of the father's care in his last lingering illness. Mary went first to some relations in the farming line, where she was kindly treated by the mistress, and towards whom she ever retained a grateful attachment. Still it was not a place that afforded her the means of improvement of any kind; and two of her aunts, her mother's sisters, perceiving this, sent her to school about the age of twelve. She did not remain there more than half a year, and

was then taken into the family of the single daughters of her mother's mistress. This was the great wish of her father for her, and had probably been his petition in many a fervent prayer. The circumstance of her half year's schooling would not have been worth mentioning, but it was the only regular instruction she ever received; yet in writing, accounts, and the needle she was fully as clever as most in her station of life. What was the state of her mind as regarded religion at this time, the writer of these simple annals has no means of judging.

Mary was never a talker, never forward in profession; and when afterwards her mind was enlightened to discern gospel truth, it was still by walking worthy of the vocation to which she was called in all meekness and lowliness that her growth in grace was chiefly seen. She was from the first a modest, obedient child, but there was a shrillness in her voice, and a little degree of sharpness, when sometimes put to take care of younger children, that did not bespeak the almost angelic temper she afterwards displayed.

She had also a remarkable dislike of attending any one that was ill, and a fear of sickness and death. Yet the Lord enabled her by his grace to be almost always the tender nurse of the most trying infirmities, and to watch by the bedside in patient fortitude the expiring lamp of more than one friend. She was placed under the care of an aunt, who was the upper servant of the family, and a most conscientious, excellent woman.

Mary, as she grew in stature, grew also in wisdom and in the knowledge of the Lord. God had given her more than a usual share of beauty, but her modesty and retired habits formed some of the prominent traits of her character. When the servants of some of the great families in the neighbourhood came to C., and of course wished to notice the very pretty girl, Mary always contrived to slip away; and when they dined there, Mary never took any part in their trifling conversation. As her brother observed a little before her death, "Somehow Mary is not suited to this world, she is quite unlike other girls; all her pleasure is

in her work and reading her Bible." She was, as may easily be concluded from this description of her, one of the very best of servants. She never put off any of her business; if a party left the house, their rooms were instantly put in order; and if any friend came by chance in the evening, Mary was in no bustle; the apartment was ready.

Being active as well as diligent, if anything extra was required, she was both able and willing to perform it; nor can her mistresses recollect a grave look or discontented tone that betrayed the too common feeling, "This business does not belong to my place." Grace had eminently subdued selfishness in her. Was there any little recreation proposed that was thought right for the servants to be indulged in, Mary had always some reason why the other should go, and she should remain at home; and yet the brilliant sparkle of her eye, and the animated glow of countenance, when she had attended a Bible or missionary meeting, showed the high pleasure she received from them. If from negligence, or any little untoward circum-

stance over which she had had little control, inconveniences occurred to others, especially to her mistresses, poor Mary would not recover her cheerfulness for some days.

Her dress was very plain, her habits careful and economical, so that she had saved a very pretty sum in the savings bank, though the writer of this little memoir has reason to believe many a donation was given by her. This she knows, that she was a regular penny subscriber both to the Bible Society and the Church Missionary Society, and always took in the "Friendly Visitor," besides purchasing of her mistress other little good books and tracts, both for herself and to give away. Several cheap prayer-books she has bought for this purpose.

Mary was much attached to the Church of England. Some of her fellow-servants liked occasionally to go to a Methodist meeting on a Sunday evening, when there was no sermon at the parish church; Mary always preferred attending there, though there were only the prayers. Among the friends who

visited at the house, Mary was the universal favourite, and in consequence met with so much notice and kindness, and from some even distinguished for rank and talent, as would have injured any young person less established in vital religion; but in her it produced only the modest smiles or tears of gratitude.

We have probably all some peculiar task or duty assigned to us, besides those incident to our station or situation in life; that of this excellent creature was attending the sick and the infirm, and it must be remembered that this was one to which naturally she had a great dislike. One of her mistresses was nearly confined to her bed for twelve years by age and debility. At first the service of sleeping in this room was divided between her and another servant, but Mary discovering it was unpleasant to her, took it wholly upon herself, and for many years never resigned the arduous post. Nor was this all; the fellow-servant whose feelings she thus considered was afflicted afterwards by a complaint in the hip, which confined her a perfect cripple to her bed for four or five years. When Mary's

"An incessant attendance in her room."—PAGE 111.

active business was performed, she regularly carried her work and sat all the remainder of her time by the bedside of the poor sufferer. This office of love had not long ceased, when the increasing infirmities of her mistress called her to a more incessant and arduous attendance in her room — too arduous, probably, for her strength. Always insisting that these attentions did not injure her, and no apparent ill effects appearing for a long time, and the first that occurred being soon removed, there was not perhaps sufficient forethought for her.

In the autumn, however, a little cough began, with quick emaciation. Medical aid was directly called in, but so rapid was the disease, that in ten weeks from the perceived commencement of it her sweet spirit had fled to her Saviour. Her behaviour throughout her illness was exactly of a piece with her life—silent, retired, calm, thoughtful. She never from the earliest stage thought she should recover, and certainly never wished it, though at times she complained of being distressed with doubts about her acceptance with

God. But if the writer of this account remembers rightly, she had none of these fears after receiving the sacrament about a week before her death. Some hours previous to it she fell into such an agonizing struggle as was dreadful to witness.

In the midst of this scene, so painful to the beholders, she raised both her hands, and burst out into a triumphant strain of exultation. It appeared as if she had a bright manifestation of the Saviour, and of her own approaching glory. When this subsided, she said she had been disturbed, or she should have been then in heaven. The remaining few hours of her life were quite calm. She said to her brother, "The bitterness of death is past;" and so it proved, for, without a sigh, she drew her last breath, at the age of twenty-nine.

Father, I know that all my life
  Is portion'd out for me,
And the changes that are sure to come
  I do not fear to see;
But I ask Thee for a present mind,
  Intent on pleasing Thee.

I ask Thee for a thoughtful love,
Through constant watching wise,
To meet the glad with joyful smiles,
And wipe the weeping eyes;
And a heart at leisure from itself,
To soothe and sympathize.

I would not have the restless will
That hurries to and fro;
Seeking for some great thing to do,
Or secret thing to know;
I would be treated as a child,
And guided where I go.

Wherever in the world I am,
In whatsoe'er estate,
I have a fellowship with hearts
To keep and cultivate,
And a work of lowly love to do
For the Lord on whom I wait.

So I ask Thee for the daily strength,
To none that ask denied,
And a mind to blend with outward life,
While keeping at thy side;
Content to fill a little space,
If Thou be glorified.

And if some things I do not ask
In my cup of blessing be,
I would have my spirit fill'd the more
With grateful love to Thee,
More careful, not to serve Thee much,
But to please Thee perfectly.

There are briars besetting every path
That call for patient care;
There is a cross in every lot,
And an earnest need for prayer;
But a lowly heart, that leans on Thee,
Is happy anywhere.

In a service which thy will appoints
There are no bonds for me;
For my inmost heart is taught the truth
Which makes thy children free;
And a life of self-renouncing love
Is a life of liberty.

"At a pleasant town in Wales."—PAGE 115.

SORROW OF THE WORLD.

"THE sorrow of the world worketh death." During a short stay with a party of Christian friends at a pleasant town in Wales, I met with a striking and melancholy illustration of the truth of these words; and as the circumstance alluded to holds out a profitable warning to all, and especially to those in similar stations of life, not to labour only for the meat that perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, and in the hour of trouble to cast all their care upon one who careth for them, I am induced to relate it, in the hope that the blessing of God may attend the reading of it.

As soon as we were settled in our lodgings, I inquired of the woman of the house if she knew of any poor sick people in the neighbourhood, who would be glad of a visit from a Christian friend? She said she only knew of one person, a poor woman who was dying of a

broken heart, in consequence of not being able to let her lodgings, and being obliged to sell the furniture to pay the rent. She added that it was a very hard case, as her husband was out of employ, and they had an orphan niece living with them. As it was late at night when I heard this, I deferred visiting the poor woman till the following morning, when, finding whereabouts she lived, I set out. The house, which I soon found, and which was the one they had taken for the purpose of letting lodgings, was pleasantly situated, though at an inconvenient distance from the sea shore. The knocker was wrapped up in straw, to deaden the sound, so that it was some time before I could make myself heard; at last the door was opened by the niece, a modest, delicate looking girl of about fifteen.

In answer to my inquiries respecting her aunt, she said, with much feeling, "Oh, ma'am, she's very bad, we don't know what to do; but would you like to see her?" and on my saying that I should, she showed me into a side room on the ground floor, where such

a scene of distress presented itself as I shall never forget. On a bed, made up on the floor, in one corner of the room, lay the poor woman in a state of insensibility. Now and then she seemed to rouse herself a little, and attempted to get up, but was prevented by her husband and an elderly woman, who stood at each side. The poor girl stood at the bottom of the bed crying. The husband soon made me acquainted with their sorrowful story. They had saved a little money before marriage, and as the wife had been in service, and was an excellent cook and housekeeper, they had laid it out in furnishing the present house, intending to let lodgings. The first year the plan answered very well; but the next season some mischievous persons spread the report that their last lodgers had been obliged to leave them on account of the rooms swarming with insects—a story, as I afterwards learnt, as false as it was unkind, and invented probably by some one who wished to recommend their own lodgings in preference. The consequence was, the lodgings were unengaged the whole

of the summer; and the husband, who was a carrier, being out of employ at the same time, they were at last constrained to sell the furniture, which they had bought with their hard-earned savings, to pay the rent. A loan of £8 would have saved them from this last extremity, and enabled them to keep the house on another season; but the friends they applied to refused their assistance, and the sale took place. The poor woman's distress at parting with what seemed their only means of recovering their losses was very great; and though, from all I could learn, both she and her husband were what the world calls highly respectable and church-going people, their religion was but like the house built on the sand, it failed them in the hour of trial. From the day of the sale the poor woman sank under her troubles. "Oh, it was pitiful to see her," said the poor man; "she would get up in the night and walk about the house, crying as if her heart would break; and she'd neither speak to any one, nor eat a bit of anything, do all as we could."

Poor woman! she had laboured after the meat that perisheth, and she had not learned to trust in Him who said, "Your Heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matt. vi. 32, 33). Her sorrow was emphatically "the sorrow of the world, that worketh death." It had preyed upon her spirits, broken down her constitution, deprived her of reason, and brought her to the brink of the grave; but it had not brought her to pray, it had not led her to Jesus.

In about ten days from the day of the sale nature sank beneath the exhaustion; a large abscess, which broke outwardly, added to her sufferings; and, when I saw her, the doctor who attended her had no hope either of her recovery, or of any interval of reason before her death. "Oh, Margaret, Margaret," exclaimed the husband, bursting into tears, and taking hold of his wife's hand, "and is it come to this? Oh, ma'am, you don't know

what a wife she's been to me, so tidy and industrious; only she fretted so about coming down in the world, and having like all to begin again. But, oh, it's the hardest trouble of all to see her so; I could have borne anything but this;" and his feelings overcame him for a while. It was in vain to attempt to speak to the poor woman; but I endeavoured to lead her almost heart-broken husband to that Saviour whom, in the day of prosperity, they had forgotten, but who waits to be gracious, and casteth out none that come unto Him—"a Friend that loveth at all times, and a Brother born for adversity" (Prov. xvii. 17). He seemed to feel what was said, and I felt a hope that his afflictions were, by the blessing of God, breaking up the hard and stony ground of his heart, and preparing it to receive the good seed of the gospel.

After I had prayed with and for this afflicted family, and more especially for the poor woman, that an interval of reason might be granted unto her, to know the things that belonged to her peace, before they were hid from her

eyes, I took my leave, promising to call again. Before I could fulfil my promise, I heard that the poor woman was no more. A Christian friend had called upon them and gone to prayer with them, and during his prayer the poor woman showed some signs of returning reason; she listened attentively, and when he had finished, she clasped her hands together, and exclaiming, "Oh, Lord Jesus, have mercy on my poor soul," expired almost immediately.

He who saved the thief on the cross could, and I hope did, even at this hour work in her heart to believe on Him who justifieth the ungodly. But who would wish to die as she died? who would wish to live a life of toil and anxiety, "careful and troubled about many things," and to find upon a dying bed that the "one thing needful" had been forgotten? I remember to have heard it remarked upon death-bed conversion, that God has given us in his Word one such instance in the dying thief that none might despair, and but one that none might presume. But, O my dear reader, if you would die the death of the righteous, seek

for that precious faith which will enable you to live the life of the righteous, and surely you shall find that such a life is a blessed life. Then, though you may be called to labour hard for your daily bread, you shall find the promise true, "They that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing" (Ps. xxxiv. 10). Then you shall find that "man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Deut. viii. 3), for your soul shall be fed with that bread of life, of which, if any man eat, "he shall live for ever" (John vi. 51). Then, whatever your outward circumstances may be, you will learn, even in this wilderness, to sing with David, "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want." And if to you to live is Christ, to die will be gain (Phil. i. 21); and in the valley of the shadow of death you shall fear no evil, because He is with you, and both his rod and his staff (his fatherly chastisements, and the exceeding great and precious promises, which are all yea and amen in Christ Jesus) shall comfort you. That this, dear reader, may be your joyful experience in

life and in death is the earnest prayer of one who, having tasted that the Lord is gracious, would fain proclaim unto others, "Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him."

With tearful eyes I look around;
Life seems a dark and stormy sea;
Yet 'midst the gloom I hear a sound,
A heavenly whisper, Come to Me!

It tells me of a place of rest;
It tells me where my soul may flee:
Oh! to the weary, faint, opprest,
How sweet the bidding, Come to Me!

When the poor heart with anguish learns
That earthly props resign'd must be,
And from each broken cistern turns,
It hears the accents, Come to Me!

When against sin I strive in vain,
And cannot from its yoke get free,
Sinking beneath the heavy chain,
The words arrest me, Come to Me!

When nature shudders, loth to part
From all I love, enjoy, and see;
When a faint chill steals o'er my heart,
A sweet voice utters, Come to Me!

Come! for all else must fail and die;
Earth is no resting-place for thee;
Heavenward direct thy weeping eye;
I am thy portion, Come to Me!

O voice of mercy, voice of love!
In conflict, grief, and agony,
Support me, cheer me from above,
And gently whisper, Come to Me!

NO SAFETY BUT IN CHRIST.

It is now some years ago since I was told that a person in my congregation would feel thankful if I would preach from those words of our Lord contained in John vi. 37, "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." I need not say that I received great pleasure in having such a request made to me, for I concluded, at once, that it must have proceeded from some one occupied with the most important of all subjects, that of the soul's salvation, and who was probably at this time labouring under mistaken views, or trembling between hope and fear, and desirous of hearing if these words did indeed contain all the comfort and encouragement to sinners which they seem to do. I was also glad that the person was unknown to me, for I was determined to be faithful and personal in my address, and as I was ignorant whose heart and conscience was to

apply my instructions to itself, I was more unfettered than I otherwise should have been. After a few remarks, therefore, showing that coming to Christ is the great hinge on which salvation turns, and after stating the circumstance which had led me to the words of the text, I observed, "I cannot but suppose that the person on whose account I preach from these words must have seen in them something difficult which wanted explaining, or something encouraging which wanted applying, and so desirous am I of meeting this case, that, as if there were no other person present, I shall address myself to him or her, praying that the Spirit of God may direct me to speak a word in season which may prove the power of God unto salvation. I shall draw my bow at a venture, and may God speed the arrow that it may reach the heart."

It was not long after the delivery of the discourse, before I found out that my unknown inquirer was Mary C., a young female of the congregation, with whom I was well acquainted. She was about nineteen years of age, and was

"Regular in attendance at all our services."—PAGE 127.

at this time a diligent and active teacher in the Sunday-school, and regular in her attendance at all our services. There was much mildness in her temper, and her amiable and engaging manners and conduct won her the esteem of all who knew her. I took an early opportunity of conversing with her on the subject of the discourse, and her views and feelings in reference to it. From the interviews which I had with her at this time, the particulars of which I cannot now recollect, I hoped well of her, and considered the time not far distant when she might become a lively member of the Body of Christ. But her history forms a painful and affecting illustration of that exclamation, "O Ephraim! what shall I do unto thee? O Judah! what shall I do unto thee? for your goodness is as a morning cloud, and as the early dew it goeth away." Soon afterwards she received the attentions of a young man, of whom nothing more need be said, than that he was destitute of piety, and in a little time they were married.

For a while they both attended the house

of God together. I remember visiting them after their marriage, and reminding them that the foundation of all domestic happiness must be laid in religion, I expressed the hope that they would not hinder, but rather help each other in the way to heaven. But whatever of promise first appeared, began gradually to wither away, leaf fell after leaf, until there were but few signs left of a mind seriously alive to Christ and eternity. And yet, when I have sometimes noticed her coming alone to the week evening lectures, I could not yield up the hope that all concern was not vanished, and that Mary did yet retain "some good thing towards the Lord God of Israel."

At the end of three years, I was obliged by the gracious ordering of God's good providence, to be absent from home for six months on account of illness. On my return, I found poor Mary C. labouring under consumption. The colour had faded from her face. Her slender form was now so weakened, that she scarcely seemed capable of the least exertion. When she saw me, she expressed the highest pleasure on my

safe return; her glassy eyes sparkled with a momentary delight, and a hectic flush lighted up her whole countenance. In my after visits, however, there was much of melancholy and thoughtfulness mingled with the satisfaction which she expressed in seeing me. I now tried from time to time to lead her to that Saviour to whom three years before I supposed she was so anxious to come. I read and prayed with her several times a week, and at the close of every interview, I felt satisfaction in thinking that she appeared to be a step nearer. But ever and anon I had to begin again. It seemed as if she had no hold of the blessed truths of salvation, except so long as they were presented to her mind by others.

Many were the hopes that she expressed, and many the determinations that she formed. Her disease flattered her, and she looked anxiously for recovery. Her mind, however, frequently misgave her, and then she feared for her spiritual condition. Sometimes, when she has listened with fixed attention to the simple statement of the gospel mercy, and I have

inquired whether she could not apply the matter to herself, or whether, for instance, she possessed any humble assurance of her interest in it, her reply would be, "Nay, I dare not say that, but I hope." She never appeared able to fix her mind with any degree of steadfastness, or to derive that joy and peace which flow from believing.

This sort of indistinctness, fearful misgiving of the heart, and want of comfort and confidence, was, however, in some measure explained to me by her conversations on different occasions. She once said, "I have been thinking how my past life has been all neglect. What privileges I have neglected! I scarcely dare think of what I have not done, and yet I am always thinking of that, always recurring to my past neglect. You remember, sir, the sermon I asked you to preach. Well, at that time so hardened, so indisposed was I, that I almost grudged to go and hear it. Not that I had not had many religious thoughts and many good wishes. I wanted to hear of mercy, and I was glad to think of Jesus Christ as the Saviour of

Sinners. I had often prayed, and those words greatly affected me. I liked your discourse, but I felt as if I was not sincere. Sometimes I seemed just at the door of the kingdom of heaven; but how I cannot tell—all was in vain—those good thoughts had but half my heart, they floated for a time in my head, I was quite divided, full of plans and purposes, but all were vain, broken, and disregarded. I have neglected my privileges—oh! how have I neglected my privileges!" These things were often repeated to me in substance. Poor young woman! how earnestly would she wish and pray for more time for preparation for eternity, and catch at the most distant gleam of hope.

At length her strength was wasting rapidly away, and spasmodic attacks of a severe kind hastened the hour of her departure. At these times she would send for me to pray with her, and entreat me not to leave her, until she got well enough to conclude that she should live through the night.

The last attack came; I saw her; she caught with eagerness every word, but was bewildered,

and, perhaps, distracted with pain. While I prayed she became composed, and I took leave of her, never to see her face any more. In three hours after I had gone, her spirit had taken its flight. She had said, within a few minutes of death, to a friend, "Do you think that God will have mercy on such a one as I?" "Oh, yes!" was the reply, "there can be no doubt, if you only seek and ask for that mercy." She then turned her head, and shortly afterwards expired.

Reader! it is not necessary that you should form a judgment respecting the actual condition of Mary C. Eternity will disclose whether she was, indeed, a brand plucked from the burning.

But there are important lessons which you may, which you ought, to learn from this narrative. See how possible it is to have religious impressions, and yet to sin against them, not to follow them out; to have thoughts of Christ without actually coming to Him. How easy it is to reject appeals the most faithful, personal, and convincing! Think how dangerous it is to

stop in inquiries after salvation; how dreadful, on a dying bed, are the thoughts of having neglected opportunities and privileges. Consider, further, how hard it will be to obtain comfort and assurance at last, if you should now "quench the Spirit." I know not how any one can expect to have hope in death, or be safe for eternity, who trifles with convictions of sin, and who after feeling the want of the Saviour, can rest without an immediate and direct application to Him, so as to become the present subject of salvation.

The Lord's-day after the funeral, I preached from the words, "Him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out," the very same sermon which I have before mentioned as having delivered more than three years ago at the request of Mary C. She had given it me in charge as her dying wish. "Talk to my father, and Henry (her husband), and all our family." This I endeavoured to do, addressing them towards the close of my sermon in these words—"I can recommend to you the same truths which I recommended to her. They will do to die with.

Think how much she deplored her neglect of her opportunities. God is speaking to you by repeated calls. Death will come again. He will come soon. He may come suddenly. No safety but in Christ."

AN OLD ENGLISH FARMER.

It has been very truly said that it is one of the first effects of the Gospel, when its blessings are savingly applied to the soul, to liberalize the heart. I think a man may well doubt his having received mercy who is not ready to show mercy. If we have really been brought to know the pardoning grace of Jesus, through which our debt of ten thousand talents has been freely cancelled, we cannot but be so filled and overwhelmed with a sense of our own happiness as to feel mercy, and pity, and liberality running through our every desire and thought towards others. The truth of the remark is moreover well supported, I think, by Scripture. Christ clearly expects that all who truly follow Him do it with the full surrender of all that belongs to them; so that if they have money, or influence, or abilities, or health, or education, they must give up all these to do

his service, and employ them to his glory, doing good with them in their day and generation.

And oh! all is little enough in return for what Christ has done for them! Hence, in the last day, when it is to be known who are the true followers of Christ, and who are not, the proofs of a faith working by love are sought for in the works of liberality and kindness. Who amongst the professed followers of Jesus have fed the hungry, clothed the naked, visited the distressed? They are the blessed of God, and their works follow them, not to claim or merit heaven—the victorious Saviour has done this for them long before—but to prove the reality of that faith, that divine principle, which has grafted them into Him, and given them an interest in the blessings of his redemption. Hence, when we see a person professing to be a follower of Christ, and yet dead to the duties of his stewardship, and dead to the wants, spiritual and temporal, of his neighbour—and the whole world is in Christ's view the Christian's neighbour—we cannot but fear that he is a self-deceiver. If we have freely re-

"Had grown rich on his farm."—PAGE 137.

ceived, we shall freely give. To say nothing of the awful sin of idolatry, which is clearly in fatal exercise where a man holds back and accumulates his money, or spends it on his own selfishness, rather than give according to his power for the good of others.

There are, I fear, many cases of this sort in the Christian world. Now and then, however, we are cheered with a different picture; we see the triumph of Divine grace in the most unlikely and difficult instances, and are led to exclaim in thankfulness and praise, "What hath God wrought!"

One remarkable instance of this kind I had once the great privilege of seeing. It was the case of an old farmer.

Mr. J. was the picture of an old English farmer. He was a tall, handsome man, with marked features, wore his little brown wig, and altogether was very interesting in his outward appearance. But, alas! within he wanted every gracious ornament. He had prospered greatly in the world, had grown rich on his farm of several hundred acres, but his life on earth was

drawing to a close, and all was dark, and dismal, and hopeless before him. Religion he had never cared for, beyond going, when quite convenient, to his church. He was sordid, and covetous, and selfish, intent only on making a penny in every possible way, without being too nice and particular as to points of moral honesty and integrity.

As an overseer, he was cruel and hard-hearted; in fact, the poor dreaded the very sight of him. Such was Mr. J. till he had reached the borders of this wilderness, purse-proud, overbearing, covetous, ungodly.

But by the mercy of God there came to his parish church a powerful, faithful preacher of Christ's Gospel, and Mr. J. was one of the first to feel the influence of Gospel truth. It was sent home to his heart with the demonstration of the Spirit and of power; and then, what a change. I had the delight of witnessing the change. Oh! what a spirit of conviction was at work in him. There was the simplicity and gentleness of a little child. The poor old man wept tears of sorrow and shame to think

of his long misspent life, and his hard-heartedness to the poor. Oh! it stung him to the very quick. And now, what fruits meet for repentance did he bring forth? Where he had all through life been most wanting, he was now most abounding.

My readers will, I am sure, be pleased, and oh, may they be profited! by some little anecdotes of him, which the lapse of years cannot drive from my memory. The cares and duties of his farm he now chiefly deputed to others, and nearly his whole time was spent in devising and going about doing good. Kindness and liberality to the poor were now as conspicuous as cruelty and covetousness had been all through life. It was beautiful to see how he set his wits to work to devise kind and liberal things. He used to sally forth from his house nearly every day on some errand of mercy to the neighbouring town. Often and often have I met him in his walks. It was his practice to go from house to house visiting the sick and needy, and administering to their wants. Where parish relief was clearly wanted, there he was

now the poor man's friend with the overseer. Where his own purse could alone be available, there it was always open to any extent the case required. Where wine or nourishing food was better than money, there it was always forthcoming.

But in this exercise of charity the dear old man had his trials. His wife was as yet a stranger to the power of divine grace. She saw the change in her husband, and one would have thought could not do otherwise than rejoice in it; but no; she ridiculed and condemned, and, wedded to her covetousness, she blamed his extravagance, as she deemed it, and did all she could to check his charities.

Mr. J. got a wooden case made just the size of his pocket, like two round pudding basins screwed together, which he daily took to the town, well filled with bits of pudding, and whatever he could lay his hands upon. He went so far as to run away once or twice with a chicken out of the larder for a poor sick woman, but his wife flew into a rage, and positively prevented this. Mr. J. was not to be hindered in his

work of mercy, and he in future went early into the farm-yard, and wrung off the neck of the chicken and took it away with him unknown to his wife.

One anecdote serves to show how Divine grace can make a man the very opposite of his former self. There was an exuberance, an overflowing of love in this old man's heart. When a pauper died, Mr. J. was always on the alert. The poor of the parish were buried as cheaply as possible, and the graves were dug very shallow. This could not affect the deceased, but it hurt the feelings of the friends.

It was one of Mr. J.'s little ways of doing good to give the sexton an extra shilling or two to make the pauper's grave the usual depth. And there he was to be seen in the churchyard superintending the work, and taking care that all was done right. In point of real benefit this was of course nothing compared with the money and the food given to the living; but I know not that I ever met with an incident which more sweetly marked the kindness and

benevolence of a Christian man. True love is, indeed, ingenious in its efforts to do good.

Mr. J. had tasted enough himself of the luxury of doing good to make him wish that others should do the same. His feelings, too, were almost overpowered by the distress which he witnessed in the poor town of ——, and he felt naturally anxious to rouse others to a becoming exercise of charity. He had long wished to interest his highly respected landlord, old Lord —— in these things, and now a good opportunity occurred. Mr. J. had met with an extreme case of distress. I saw it myself, and never shall I forget the feelings it excited in Mr. J. There was a poor suffering woman, unable to leave her bed, with nothing but a bit of straw in the corner of her room on which to lie, and her crying children around her almost starved. Mr. J. met Lord —— one morning in the street, just as he came from this scene of misery.

After the usual salutations, "My Lord," said Mr. J., "I do not think you have any idea of the sufferings of your fellow-creatures, even

of some very near you. It is, indeed, true that one-half of the world has no notion how the other half lives. Will you let me ask your lordship to alight and go with me into a poor cottage close by?" Lord —— was as much the perfect picture of an old English gentleman of rank as Mr. J. was of the farmer. Kind and condescending and humane, he was beloved by his numerous tenantry, and respected by all around him. But he laboured under the great disadvantages which are the lot of many in his exalted situation of life. He had flatterers, but no faithful friends, and knew nothing of the details of human misery, and, I fear, little of his own accountableness as a steward of the Most High.

Lord —— at once complied with Mr. J.'s request, and leaving his horse with his servant, followed Mr. J. into the cottage. It was a new scene indeed to his lordship, and on coming out with his eyes full of tears, he thanked Mr. J. for making him acquainted with the real state of things around him, acknowledging that he could not have conceived it possible that

such distress could exist so near his residence, and giving him orders to supply everything necessary at his expense, he departed.

Mr. J. is long since gone to his heavenly home; but the memory of his new life cannot soon die.

Oh! reader, take heed and beware of covetousness. If your heart has not been fully and widely opened towards Christ and towards all mankind for his sake, depend upon it all is wrong, all has yet to be begun. But his grace and power are almighty, his love is infinite; and He who wrought such wonders in the case of old Mr. J. can make all new with you. Make haste, and flee for your life!

"There are frailer things that you outlive."—PAGE 145.

A CHRISTIAN FAMILY.

It was on a gloomy afternoon in February that we went together to visit old Isaac's dying wife. It was the first walk we had taken together for many months. The breath of the fresh air, and the feeling of returning strength to enjoy it, will give pleasure at all times; and we enjoyed the walk, though yet there was scarcely a half-opened daisy along the bank or a bird in the hedge. The thrush (storm-cock, as the people here call him, because he sings in such boisterous weather), shunned this chill and cloudy afternoon; not one robin greeted us, winter's bird though he be; nor could we discover that blush of red along the hedge, which, in a week or two more, will tell that spring, and her buds and blossoms, are coming.

Ah, frail flowers! Yet there are frailer things that you outlive. It is not only the yew of a thousand years, and the venerable oak, that

laugh to scorn the mightiness of man; but the lowly lilies will spring up for fifty years together in the same spot, when he that first set them and his children are gone, and their place knows them no more.

But why repeat the same tale so often? Because I was thinking how short a time old Hannah has to live. We shall not see her any more stooping amongst the narrow borders of her little garden. But come up the few steps of the steep and winding staircase; here she lies in her clean whitewashed room, and from hence she will never remove till carried out for the last time. Her illness has been a very trying one. She was seized with paralysis seventeen weeks since, and her senses have been much affected; one side is rendered quite useless, her voice is altered, and her sight is gone. She is unable to feed herself or to lift herself in the bed, and to the questions of her affectionate children she can scarcely make a reasonable reply. The world and all its concerns are passing from her as if they had never been; but on one subject—the mercy of her Redeemer—her

mind is clear and strong. "That," says she, as if she felt the weakness of her memory on other matters—"that I shall never, *never*, NEVER forget."

At times (but they are now more and more rare) a spark of intelligence seems to blaze up amongst the dying embers. As, an evening or two since, her husband, on his return home from work, asked his daughters if her mind had been comfortable that day, she caught his meaning, and, exerting herself to speak loud enough for those downstairs to hear her, said that in that matter all was well; that she had an humble trust in Him who will never forsake them that trust in Him. On subjects of temporal concern, however, she is completely lost. Her poor, heavy, useless arm, woman-like, she thinks is a sleeping infant; and sometimes she says she is quite weary, and begs her daughters to take the dear child for a little. Overhearing one of them giving her kind visitor this proof that her mental faculties were nearly gone, "Ah!" interrupted she, "I am going to heaven! I shall have right knowledge there!" She

never complains of pain or poverty; all seems right to her. Though the small quantity of food, except what charity supplies, is coarse, and little fit for an invalid, she always acknowledges it as her Father's gift, and enjoys it as such. Want, and cold, and illness seem matters of no importance to her; the hope of the glory to be revealed seems to swallow up all concern for this life. "It is not a crown of gold," I heard her say, "nor one of silver: it is a crown of glory that is laid up for me." One expression of natural feeling I witnessed. As one of her daughters was mentioning the death of a sister, whom they lost about ten months ago, the aged mother burst into tears, exclaiming, "She was a dear blessed creature:" but she presently dried her eyes. "I'm going fast, fast to her," she said; "I shall soon see her."

It is indeed cause for great thanksgiving when parents are permitted to see a whole family of sons and daughters treading that path which they themselves have found to be pleasantness and peace; and such, I believe, is now granted to these old people. Their remem-

brances of this last daughter, in particular, are very delightful. She was nearly blind, very slow of speech, and exceedingly infirm to outward appearance, yet, as Fox beautifully says, "quick of understanding in the Lord's matters." Oh, the wisdom that is from above, how independent, how superior is it to all outward aids! Quiet, patient, humble, and industrious, there she sat at her spinning-wheel, day after day, and year after year, expecting nothing on earth, but with a heart set upon the things above; the poorest of that poor family, yet the first to be called to her inheritance; the lowest in her father's house, the foremost to take her place in those mansions, of which eye has not seen nor ear heard the glory. She was suddenly attacked by some complaint in her head, so violent that she feared she should lose her senses. "I pray," said she—and it was one of her last reasonable sentences—"I pray that, if the Lord sees fit to take my senses, He will take my speech too, that I may not say words to grieve his Holy Spirit." Her prayer was heard. On Thursday her senses forsook her, and about the same time

she ceased to speak. On Sunday, her sister, standing by, thought she heard her articulate the words, "Lord, now let thy servant depart in peace;" and so she reached her home.

But I must not forget the old man—the very picture of an English cottager—a little bent and toil-worn, yet still retaining proof in his hale figure, clear eyes, and healthy complexion, that if labour is "the primal curse," it is yet "softened into mercy." He has feared God from his youth up, and his happy countenance assures you at the first glance that his heart realizes the promise, "Even to old age I am He, even to hoary hairs I will carry you." I was some time ago much struck by the remark of a clergyman, made in familiar conversation: "If a Christian is but a shoeblack, he ought to be the best in the parish;" and, as far as my observation goes, it will certainly be the case. It was our old Isaac's diligence, as he broke stones on the road, that first attracted a friend's attention to him. When the circumstance was mentioned to him, "I should be very sorry to need any human eye to watch me," said he;

"if I rest five minutes, I know I'm bound to make it up again." His language is frequently figurative and poetical; naturally so, because he draws from the two sources of perfect poetry —the book of God and the book of nature. From every surrounding circumstance his hungering and thirsting mind draws food. I remember his spiritualizing his employment the other day, when he was found scraping a very dirty lane. "This reminds me," said he, "of the ministers of the heavenly gospel; they are sent, as we are, to prepare the way, to make straight the path; and they toil and labour as we do. Now a bit seems clean, and there 'tis a little smoother; but very soon 'tis all disheartening, all as bad again as ever. Well, we begin again, toil over it again; our work will be done at last; and they must wait in patience till the great Master comes to finish his own." His affection for his aged wife has always been extremely strong, and it is delightful to observe how the love of a Christian connection can survive all the outward aids of youth, interest, or personal attraction. "She asks many times

in the day if he is not come home yet," said the daughter; "and, tired down as he is, he won't stop even to warm his hands till he goes upstairs to see her, and, if she likes, to read or pray with her." The last time she was sufficiently in possession of her senses to enjoy the Word of God, as he read it to her, she expressed herself with remarkable delight and energy as to the pleasure it had afforded her. "It seems as if I was in heaven," said she. "The room seems full of heaven." "What," said her daughter, "do you see anything?" "No," she replied, "it is not to be seen or heard, it is to be felt."

Oh, glorious gospel, that shines thus in the dark valley and shadow of death. The old man's strength is labour and sorrow, and I think his toil is almost done. His spirits seem to excite him to exertions too great for his strength; and when he shall cease to earn his five or seven shillings a week (for his wages are now no more), I wonder how he will be provided for? They have all lived very hardly this winter, for the young women (both sickly, and one nearly blind) have almost laid aside their work to attend

to their completely helpless mother. It would be a grievous thing to send to the poor-house one whose orderly and decent habits, and whose industry from his youth up, have surrounded his own little home with so many comforts. True, the rapid increase of his young family, and the lowness of his wages, never could allow of his making provision for these years of weakness, and even in the best of times he often fared hardly. But there, ornamenting the white-washed wall of the home in which he has lived so long, are still the coloured prints from Scripture history, in which he used now and then to indulge himself; and there is his poor wife's assortment of various glasses and crockery ware, making the blue corner cupboard look so gay; and the jug of early primroses on the dresser; and his kind daughters see that the hearth is swept, and the fire-irons bright, because he likes to see it so; and they put his own arm-chair in the chimney corner; and if the meal is very scanty, affectionate care prepares it for him, and sets it before him. How different would it be at the poor-house! But "I will never leave

thee, I will never forsake thee," says the Word of promise. What shall we ask more? Will the God of heaven and earth compass about his servant with his mercy, and draw near to him in loving-kindness? and does it much matter where? No! all must be well with you, poor old Isaac! A little longer to toil, once more to weep at the grave of a friend; a few more difficult and dark steps to make, and then to be in that land where we shall never be sad or weary again.

"I attended church because others did."—PAGE 155.

GRACE ABOUNDING.

I RECEIVED good instruction from my mother in childhood, and had been admitted into the new covenant by baptism. My father early entered into the rest that remaineth for the people of God. As I grew up I became impatient of a pious mother's restraint, and was daily in company with those whose example and influence were hurtful. At the age of fourteen I had commenced learning a trade, but in the course of two or three years found means to get clear of a faithful master, and to have my time and movements at my own disposal, which, but for the free grace of God, had proved my everlasting ruin.

I sometimes attended church, but it was because others did, and because I scarce knew what else to do on the Lord's-day. But the songs of Zion, the prayers of God's people, and the warnings of faithful ambassadors pleading in Christ's stead, were all unmeaning to my

depraved heart. When they sang the praises of redeeming love, I knew no more what was meant by it than the poor heathen who never heard of God. I knelt in prayer, but it seemed to me all a tedious ceremony. I knew no more of humble communion with God than an infant; and when faithful ministers spoke of the value of Christ to lost sinners, I had no sense of what they were saying more than the child unborn. Often did I sit, marking the pew or cutting it with my knife, as wholly unconcerned as though I had not a soul to be saved or lost. I sometimes fell in with those who urged me to go to the Sunday-school or Bible-class; but I knew nothing of religion, felt no interest in it, and could but wonder at their earnest invitations. So wholly was I without God in the world, that the whole subject seemed to me unmeaning and foolish. Bad companions, with the blindness and depravity of my own heart, led me on from one step to another, until God's holy day was given at first to strolling or riding about, and at length to secret carousals, profaneness, and the most heinous sins.

But I have not told you all. I had become attached to one in whose heart a work of grace had been wrought, and whom, as she lived at a distance, I had deceived as to my true character. After two or three years spent in the manner I have related, we were united for life. I hired a couple of rooms, and we began housekeeping. I shudder to think of such a union as was then formed: a child of God bound for life to one dead in trespasses and sins, whose heart was deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. For a few Sundays I was again found in the sanctuary; but it was so irksome to me, I soon began to excuse myself, though I objected not to the attendance of my wife. I had not yet reached that height of guilt. But before the year had closed I did reach it. Yes, when she came from the evening service, where she had knelt in agonizing prayer for the lost soul of him who should have borne her in daily prayer to the mercy-seat of God, I, bitterly and demon-like, found fault that she was not at home on my return. And, oh! shall I, must I tell all? Yes, I will be honest now. I did forbid her to

leave again the house of a sinner for the place where Christ is in the midst of those who are gathered together in his name!

Tears flowed down her pale cheeks as she mildly and humbly suffered the storm of my wrath to go by. Every mark of affection and kindness were lavished in vain on my depraved and polluted heart, and she sobbed herself to sleep by the side of one whose heart was harder than a nether millstone.

I had squandered the largest part of my earnings in dress, and folly, and sin, and had become somewhat involved in debt soon after marriage; but there seemed no want of money when my wicked heart would lead me to profane the holy Sabbath. On the first Sunday in May my wife, with an angel's sweetness, said to me, "Come, dear husband, go to church with me to-day, and stay through the communion, and walk home with me. Will you?" I shall never forget the sweetness of her manner as she made that request; nor the depravity of heart that answered her, "No, I must go another way;" and I did.

I saw her full eyes as she turned to hide the fast-flowing tears; but it altered not my purpose. I went to a livery stable, hired a spirited horse with a chaise, and took up another Sabbath-breaker with myself, and rode, as we had previously agreed, to a place of resort, which, in its privacy, might allow the free indulgence of every sin, and hasten down to hell the souls of its visitors. There we drank. We seated ourselves in the bowling alley, and were soon invited to a part in the game. At that moment the sound of a church bell fell on my ears. It called to mind my wife, with the tears filling her eyes, and I refused to play. Again we drank, and then I joined the game, as if in mockery of the invitation God had given me, through the sweet accents of my wife, to spend the day in his sanctuary. As we returned at evening, a chaise in company drove by us in triumph; and in attempting to pass them again, with our horse upon the run, we were overturned with such violence as sent my companion, in the twinkling of an eye, to the bar of God. He fell upon his head in such a manner as broke

his neck instantly: and I, another Sabbath-breaker, was left with a broken thigh and a gashed head, unable to move from the spot. Oh! by the agonies of that awful hour of speedy judgment, do I plead with you, reader, to keep God's holy day.

I was borne home to my afflicted wife, and for eleven days was deprived of sense and reason. When my reason was restored to me the past slowly came to my mind, and with it all the horrors of an inward hell. My wife, with a kindness I can never repay, reproached me not, but used every means a Christian could use to heal the deeper wounds of my soul. I felt I was a condemned sinner, and without hope of mercy. No tongue can utter the agonies I experienced, the remorse and anguish that ate into my very soul. Hell seemed moved for me, to meet me at my coming. Often did I start from sleep, uttering groans and shrieks of agony and despair. My wife called in our pastor. I would not, I could not talk with him. He prayed, but I knew nothing of prayer; and he left me in more bitter anguish than before.

In the stillness of that night, as I had started from my sleep, groaning with the horrors of a troubled conscience, my wife, who sat unwearied by my bed, begged of me to try and look to God. I turned away in bitterness. She told me of the Saviour who had power to forgive sins; of his blood shed for the remission of sins; of his sacrifice on the cross; and of his promises to the believing and penitent. I listened, while my heart alone knew its own bitterness. Again I turned away in silence. She bent over me, and gently kissed me, and half whispered, "Shall I pray with you, my dear husband?" I trembled, but answered not. She knelt by my bed; and never, oh! never to my dying hour shall I forget the trembling fervour of faith with which she breathed her prayers to heaven for a lost and ruined sinner. I trembled; I could scarcely breathe. I seemed literally choked with the struggle within me. It was the striving of the Spirit. Tears slowly came to my relief, till at length, gush after gush, my soul seemed pouring forth its agony; and she, whose prayers had been blessed to the commencement of a work

of grace in my heart, freely mingled her tears with mine. I was relieved, but not comforted. My guilty heart was pierced, but as yet I knew a Saviour but in part. The morning brought again the man of God to my bedside. He saw the state I was in. He spoke of the sinner's lost and ruined condition. Oh! who can tell the anguish with which my heart responded to every word he uttered. He saw the rock was smitten and the fountain opened, though it yielded bitter waters. Then was it that he cast in the branch that made them sweet—a rod from the stem of Jesse. He led me to the Saviour—to the cross of Christ—and bid me there cast off the burden of my soul. He told me how He came to save sinners—how He died, the just for the unjust, that we might live and be reconciled to God through his atoning sacrifice; he told me of pardon to the chiefest of sinners, if I would but believe. He then read me the parable of the prodigal son, and the whole of that chapter. I sobbed aloud. He spoke of the long-suffering which Christ had shown forth in Paul, whose hands had been

red with the blood of saints, and who had been the chief of sinners. Then broke in upon my lost and bewildered soul the first gleam of faith in Christ. A ray of mercy seemed to penetrate the blackness of darkness in which I was lost. I caught at it with an eagerness I cannot describe. I begged him to pray for me; and oh! blessed be God, I could pray. Yes, then I felt there was meaning in prayer. No words can express the relief which that prayer gave to my agonized heart. The Spirit had done its work. Faith in Christ illumined my soul; I was born again. I felt how precious is Christ to the sinner's soul. Glory be to God, to the Lamb that was slain for the sins of the world, for ever and ever, Amen.

During the long confinement to which I was subjected my Bible was my unceasing study. I then understood why those who used to invite me to the means of grace were so earnest. Then, too, I understood why songs of praise were uttered in the sanctuary, and why my blessed wife had met with the saints for prayer; and never knew I a day so happy as that on

which I went to church, and joined with her in that holy communion which she once so meekly asked me to stay and witness.

I was restored to health; and though poor, I felt that I possessed imperishable riches; and I found that after seeking first the kingdom of God and his righteousness all other things were added unto me, until I was able to repay the Christian kindness on which I was at first dependent.

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"Engaged in the seafaring life."—Page 165.

A PARDONED REBEL.

William Young was in his youth a rough Newfoundland sailor, engaged in the fisheries, which draw so many of the ill-paid labourers of the West of England to engage in a more gainful occupation. He spent several years in that country, where the roughness and wildness of the seafaring men and the awful blasphemy of their language far exceeds what is heard from those who follow the same calling in England. William Young became a bold blasphemer; the wickedness of his language was extreme. While engaged in the seafaring life, he was often in great perils in the waters, but was marvellously preserved from perishing because the Lord had a purpose of mercy to his soul. While living in Newfoundland, he saw a poor afflicted man whose face was eaten up by a cancer to such a degree that his mouth and nose being nearly destroyed by the dreadful disease, he was

in danger of being starved to death. The sight of this afflicted fellow-creature made a deep impression on William Young's mind, as will appear by what follows.

After remaining a few years in Newfoundland, and having saved some money, he returned to England, married, and set up a dairy, having purchased a few cows. In this occupation he passed several years with his wife and two daughters, but still continued in his wicked blaspheming conversation, adding sin to sin; while the infinite long-suffering of God was sparing him in order to make him a marvellous monument of his saving mercy. It was about the year 1849 that he found a speck gathering on his eye, which continued slowly to increase and gave him so much uneasiness that he resolved to seek for medical help. By the kindness of a neighbouring clergyman, he obtained an order for the Eye Infirmary at Exeter. But when the surgeon there had inspected his eye, he at once pronounced it to be a cancer, that terrible disease for which there is no cure. This was a sentence, indeed, which was quite overwhelming to

this poor man, who now remembered how often he had called down such a frightful calamity upon himself, by cursing his own eyes. Doubtless, he remembered also, with the most painfully vivid recollection, what he had seen of the poor sufferer in Newfoundland, and anticipated the same lingering torments in his own case. And now he felt the wrath of God was upon him, and unspeakable terrors surrounded him. He could now see that his dreadful sins were visited upon him, and the arrows of the Almighty entered into his soul. He felt he was not only shut out from all earthly comfort, but had before him the prospect of the slow yet sure termination of his life, by the most horrible disease with which the human frame can be attacked, and beyond the grave the everlasting misery of a lost soul, the worm that never dieth, and the fire that never can be quenched.

A sense of his dreadful danger pierced his heart, as he expressed it. "When they told me it was the cancer," he said, "it struck into my very heart." At this time a poor man visited him who loved and served God in

sincerity, and told him that he must pray that he might be born again, and that the Holy Spirit might be given to him. He said, "I did pray for the Holy Spirit to enter into my heart, and the Holy Spirit did enter into my very heart." Then God's effectual grace in the knowledge of his dear Son was granted to him, by the Holy Spirit's testifying to him of Christ, and taking of the things of Christ, and showing them unto him. He could never read, and now his sound eye was closed as well as the diseased one; and he, of course, had given no heed to instruction in the time of his wicked life in Newfoundland, nor since he had returned to his native land, though he had lived in parishes where he had the opportunity of hearing the gospel faithfully preached before he went to reside at M. But now, his heart being opened, as Lydia's was, he listened with earnest attention when the Scriptures were read to him, and drank in the Word of Life, and, indeed it became in him that engrafted word which is able to save the soul.

We visited him occasionally in the adjoining parish of M., where he and his wife and

daughters still kept on their dairy. His poor, afflicted wife was a pitiable object indeed. She was literally covered with scrofula from her head to her foot, and obliged to keep her bed, so that it was a most affecting sight to see these two deeply-afflicted ones, each in a separate room, experiencing in different ways such a painful decay of the body. But the difference between them was this, Mrs. Young had a knowledge of religion, without the power of it, while her husband, who had so long lived without God in the world, was beginning to experience his effectual grace by the mighty working of his power.

While the two afflicted parents were confined, the one to her bed, the other to the fireside, the two industrious daughters carried on the business of the dairy. With the assistance of a boy, they not only made the butter and cheese, but fed and littered the cattle, carried the dairy produce to market, and sold it, exerting themselves to do work which falls rather to the lot of men than women to perform. But when Young's dreadful disease had been progressing

for two years, a new and trying affliction fell upon him. He and his wife were obliged to quit their abode, in such a state of disease and weakness as made it perilous to remove even to the shortest distance. They now felt they must give up the dairy, the conducting of which had been too great an exertion for their daughters, in addition to the attendance on their afflicted parents. They, therefore, resolved to sell their cows, which sale proved to be a loss, for they were sold under their value. But this, as well as the trial of leaving his abode, which is a peculiar one to a blind person, who cannot at once learn to feel his way about in a new house, was counted so light an affliction by him, that he surprised a friend by saying, "I am now free from all my cares." This he could say with truth, because he had now begun to taste the unspeakable consolation of knowing that he, who had been one of the chief of sinners, had obtained mercy. But to his poor wife, the vexation caused by the loss at the sale, in addition to the fatigue of moving, though only about three miles, when they took

a house in H., so aggravated her disease, that it hastened her death. His deep and tender concern for his poor wife, in knowing how much she took her loss to heart, was expressed in these words: "My poor, dear wife! I do fear she is not rightly converted."

Poor Mrs. Young lingered about three weeks after they got to H., and then died. There was some hope in her death, but we could not but feel the difference between herself and her husband, whom she had preceded in knowledge. "The first shall be last, and the last first."

Young was now left to the care of his eldest daughter, the younger having gone to service. The money realized by the sale of the cows and the dairy utensils supplied his wants during the twelve months that he still lingered under the ravages of that dreadful disease which preyed upon him. We had now the opportunity of seeing him and visiting him almost daily. It was a great privilege to read to him, and converse with him, and to carry him such soft food as he could take, for the disease was beginning to extend to his mouth. It was delightful to

observe how, from day to day, he appeared to grow in grace, and to see how that prayer which he had poured out, "that the Holy Spirit would enter into his very heart," was so abundantly answered. It was manifest that the Holy Spirit had taught him from the Word, for he would ponder and meditate all the day upon the passages of the Redeemer's life, from his birth at Bethlehem, to his death on Calvary. But the thought which seemed most continually present to his mind was the Lord Jesus pleading for him. "I do sometimes see Him," he said, "looking upon me, and making intercession to the Father for me."

The affliction increased in intensity, the diseased eye was now entirely gone, and the contiguous parts daily growing worse. The afflicted sufferer sat all the day by his fireside, with a flannel covering on his head. It was truly wonderful that under such painful circumstances his mind should not have been wholly taken up with his sufferings. But this was not the case. He was a very intelligent as well as attentive listener to the Scriptures. It seemed as if he

could say as Job did, "Thy words were found, and I did eat them," for truly they seemed to be good to his soul.

A few months before Young's sufferings were brought to their close, a farmer's wife in the same parish was afflicted with the same terrible disease, a cancer in the breast. She was a woman of the most violent passions, and ungoverned feelings, and the medical attendant knowing this to be the case, was afraid to communicate the tidings to her, fearing what might be the consequences. But it pleased God to bless the visits of a Christian lady to her effectual conversion, and the change was so manifest, her humiliation for sin, her humble trust in Christ, and her patience under the terrible affliction were so conspicuous, that all who approached her could see that God had given her a new nature; that "old things were passed away, and that all things had become new." On relating this to Young, and telling him how she, who had once been so carried away by her violent temper, had now the spirit of a little child, I added, "and you, Young, were once the prey of

violent passions, but that time is past, you are now, by the grace of God, become a new man." "Oh, yes!" he replied, "no hot passions do attend me now, they are all gone, trodden under foot somewhere."

Two aggravated evils which he greatly feared were averted from this afflicted yet favoured sufferer. He had reason to fear that the disease might extend to his brain, and so destroy his understanding, and keep him from prayer, and meditating on the Word of God. And he had also reason to fear the disease might so destroy his mouth, as to prevent his receiving food. Both these terrible calamities were averted from him by the tender compassion of the Lord. His understanding was preserved clear to the last, and also his capability of receiving refreshment, for as is often the case in the last stage of this dreadful disorder, the bursting of a vein into which the cancer had penetrated, quickly extinguished the little glimmering spark of life which was left. Then he departed to his heavenly rest a redeemed soul, a pardoned rebel, a brand plucked out of the fire.

"He enlisted as a soldier."—PAGE 175.

AN OLD SOLDIER.

SAMPSON STANIFORTH lived in the last century, and was the son of a cutler at Sheffield. This account of him is taken from one which he wrote of himself in the latter part of his life. He had no moral or religious instruction when a child, and grew up without any fear of God, or indeed any thought of Him at all.

He says of himself that it never entered his mind to think why he was born into the world, what was his business in it, or where he was to go when this life was over; and he grew up in a course of brutal vices, being as utterly without God in the world as the beasts that perish.

He was fierce and passionate, and seemed to have lost all feelings of kindness towards others; so that instead of weeping with those who wept, he often felt even inclined to rejoice in their sufferings.

At the age of nineteen he enlisted as a

soldier, in spite of the tears and entreaties of his mother; and he joined the army in Germany a few days after the battle of Dettingen. While they were encamped at Worms, orders were read at the head of every regiment that no soldier should go above a mile from the camp on pain of death, which was to be inflicted immediately, without the forms of a court-martial. This did not prevent Staniforth from straggling from the camp, and he was drinking with some of his comrades in a small town to the left of the camp, when a captain, with a guard of horse, came to take them up, being appointed to seize all he could find out of the lines, and hang up the first man without delay. The guard entered the town, and shut the gates. Staniforth saw them in time, ran to a wicket in the great gate, which was only latched, and, before the gate could be opened to let the horsemen follow him, got into the vineyards, where he hid himself, and then got back to the camp.

He had a still narrower escape not long afterwards. Many complaints had been made

of plunderers in the English army, and it was proclaimed that a guard would be out every night to hang up the first offenders that were taken. He listened to the proclamation; and as soon as the officer who read it had turned away, he set out with two of his companions upon a plundering party. They stole four bullocks, and were met by an officer driving them to the camp. Staniforth said they had bought them, and the excuse passed. On the next day the owners came to the camp to make their complaint, and three of the beasts were identified. Orders were of course given to arrest the thieves. That very morning Staniforth had been sent to some distance on an out-party, and thus, by the providence of God, he was again preserved from a shameful death.

There was in the same company with him a man from Barnard Castle, whose name was Mark Bond. "His ways," Staniforth says, "were not like those of other men: out of his little pay he saved money to send to his friends. We never could get him to drink with us. He read much, and was much in private prayer."

This good man wished much to be of some use to his comrades. He longed that they should know the same peace of mind that he felt himself, and he saw no one who seemed to be in more need of help than Staniforth. He, as might be expected, first wondered at Mark Bond's conversation, and then mocked at it. Bond, however, was not thus to be discouraged. He met him one day, when he was in distress, having neither food, money, nor credit, and asked him to go with him to hear a sermon which was to be preached that day.

Staniforth made answer, "You had better give me something to eat and drink, for I am both hungry and dry." Bond did so; he took him to a sutler's, and bought what he needed, and then persuaded him, unwilling as he was, to go with him to hear the sermon.

Little as Staniforth seemed prepared for it, and little as he expected any such effect, yet it pleased God that, by that one sermon, he should be suddenly and effectually called from a state of brutality and vice, and brought to true repentance for his sins. He returned to his tent

full of sorrow, thoroughly convinced of his miserable state, and "seeing all his sins stand in battle array against him." The next day he went early to a place where he knew some of the soldiers were accustomed to meet, and find retirement for devotion. Here he found some reading, and others at prayer. One came up to him and proposed that they should pray together; and Staniforth was obliged to confess that he had never prayed in his life, nor had ever read in any book of prayers. Mark Bond had only part of an old Bible, but he gave this to Staniforth, saying, "I can do better without it than you."

He was, indeed, a true friend. He found that Staniforth was in debt, and telling him that it became Christians to be first just, and then charitable, he said, "We will put both our pays together, and live as hard as we can, and what we spare will pay the debt."

Surely Mark Bond had learned to obey such commands as these—"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ." "Look not every man on his own things, but

every man also on the things of others." And how much less likely he would have been to succeed in endeavouring to do good to his comrades, if he had not set them such an example as this, and shown his love to them by his readiness to deny himself for their sakes!

From that time Staniforth was enabled to give up all his evil habits. Though till then a habitual swearer, he never afterwards swore an oath; though in the habit of drinking, he never was intoxicated again; he had been a gambler, but he now left off gaming; and though he had so often risked his life for the sake of plunder, he would not now take an apple or a bunch of grapes.

Still he remained for a long time in bitter distress under the weight of his sins; but he persevered in constant and earnest prayer to God for forgiveness, through Christ our Saviour; and at length it pleased God to grant him peace and joy in believing in Him. Thus were fulfilled the words of that gracious promise, "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him

return unto the Lord, for He will have mercy on him, and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon" (Isaiah lv. 7).

Staniforth's mother had from time to time sent him money and such things as he wanted, and she could provide for him. He now wrote her a long letter, asking pardon of her and his father for all his disobedience, and telling them that God, for Christ's sake, had forgiven him his sins. He also desired his mother not to send him anything more, as he knew it must straiten her, and that he had learned to be contented with his pay. His parents were very much surprised by this letter, and could scarcely understand it. It was shown to many persons; and being read by some good and kind people in Sheffield, one sent him a kind letter of advice and comfort, and a hymn-book; and another a letter, with a Bible, which was more precious to him than gold; so also was a Prayer-book which his mother sent him.

He came safe out of the battle of Fontenoy, in which Bond was also twice preserved in an extraordinary manner—a musket-ball having

struck some money in his pocket, and another having been repelled by his knife. Soon afterwards Staniforth was drafted into the artillery, and ordered back to England. Before long he married, and intended to obtain his discharge as soon as he could afterwards; but on his wedding day he was ordered to embark for Holland. The army which he joined there was under the command of Prince Charles of Lorraine. They soon came within sight of the enemy, and Staniforth thought it would not be right to apply for his discharge at such a time. He said he thought it would seem as if he were afraid to fight, and thus he might bring discredit upon his religion.

Near Maestricht two English regiments were in a sharp action, and many brave lives were lost that day. Among the fallen was poor Bond. A ball went through his leg, and he fell at Staniforth's feet. "I and another," he says, "took him in our arms, and carried him out of the ranks, while he was exhorting me to stand fast in the Lord. We laid him down, took our leave of him, and fell into our ranks again."

Afterwards Staniforth again came where his friend was lying, and where he had received another ball through the thigh; but the French were pressing upon them so closely that Staniforth was compelled to leave him thus mortally wounded, "but with his heart full of love, and his eyes full of heaven." "There," says he, "fell a great Christian, a good soldier, and a faithful friend."

When the army went into winter quarters, Staniforth bought his discharge with money sent to him by his wife, who possessed some property. He now settled near London, and passed the rest of his life in useful employment, spending all the time he could in endeavouring in various ways to do good to others.

The course of his life and the happy state of his mind are thus described by himself:—"I pray with my wife before I go out in the morning; and at breakfast time, with my family and all who are in the house. The former part of the day I spend in my business; my spare hours in reading and private exercises. I conclude the day in reading the Scriptures,

and in praying with my family. I know that religion is the gift of God through Christ, and the work of God by his Spirit; it is revealed in Scripture, and is received and retained by faith, in the use of all the ordinances of the Gospel. It consists in deadness to the world and to our own will, and devotedness of our souls, bodies, time, and substance to God, through Christ Jesus. In other words, it is the loving the Lord our God with all our hearts, and all mankind for God's sake. This arises from a knowledge of his love to us: We love Him, because we know He first loved us; a sense of which is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost that is given to us. · From the little hereof that I have experienced, I know he that experiences this religion is a happy man."

"From the Cowes steam-packet."—PAGE 185.

WHO WOULD NOT PRAY?

One Saturday evening, a clergyman landed at Southampton, from the Cowes steam-packet. As the hour was late, he lost no time in inquiring for the coach to Winchester, having engaged on the following morning to preach for a friend in that city. The London night coach was full, and although a stage would leave Southampton early in the morning, he was unwilling to travel on Sunday, if by any means it could be avoided. So he rang the bell for the waiter, and sent him for a gig.

In a short time the gig was at the door. The gentleman took his seat, and being very weary, wrapped his cloak round him, and leaned back to compose himself to a quiet nap. They had not, however, advanced far on the London road before this command of holy writ came powerfully on his mind, "Be instant in season and out of season."

He might have thought that his proper season would be in the pulpit, the next morning, for serving God and winning souls to salvation; but he knew that God's work was not to be confined to the worship of a Sunday morning; he knew that it might be done in the journey of a Saturday night. So the following conversation took place :—

"What is your name, my good friend?"

"My name's John Butler, sir."

"Have you lived long at Southampton?"

"Yes, sir; I was born at Southampton, and never lived anywhere else, sir."

"And have you always been in this business?"

"Yes, sir; I was brought up in the stables."

"Did you ever go to school?"

"Yes, sir; my mother sent me to the charity school for a month or two, but I never took much to my book, and so she gave it up. And after that I went along with my father into the stables, and helped him a little."

"I suppose, Butler, you often read the Bible at school?"

"Why, sir, I never learned to read much, and I quite forget what it was we used to read out of."

"But you have heard the Bible read in church, of course. Did you ever read that book out of which the minister reads at church?"

"I can't say that I have, sir, for I don't often go there. I've too much to do for that. When a man has to get a bit of bread in these hard times, he has to work, sir, every day, and all the day. Why, sir, I'm obliged to be out with my horse and chaise all day; though, to be sure, I can't always get hired. Now, when I get back to-night, I shall just be able to rub down my horse, and give him a feed o' corn, and then go to bed. And I must clean my harness and wash the chaise to-morrow, for perhaps somebody will want to go out with it, and I can't take people out in a dirty chaise; they wouldn't like it, you know, sir."

"Of course not, Butler; but you could leave the harness and chaise till Monday morning, and——"

"Oh no, sir; that would be impossible.

Why, what would the people say, if I should refuse to go out with them? They'd say they wouldn't have me any more, and then, sir, you know, I should lose all my custom, and what would become of my family then?"

"You had better offend your customers than break God's commandment to 'Keep holy the Sabbath-day, and do no work in it.' But if you were to refuse those who came to hire you, and were to go to church, and learn to read your Bible, I am sure you would succeed much better in the week and be a much happier man."

"Ah, sir, it's very easy to talk about being religious and all that; but when a man has, as I say, to get his bread in these hard times, he can't keep at home o' Sundays."

"But do you not know that you are sinning against God and breaking one of his commandments in taking no thought of his day and neglecting his Word? My good friend, you have a soul which must very shortly be either miserable for ever, or for ever happy; and if you are not careful——. Do you ever pray to God?"

"Pray, sir; I don't know how to pray or

what to pray for; not but what they used to tell me I ought to pray."

"Suppose, now, I were to give you a prayer, would you always offer it?"

"Really, sir, I can't promise that; I've no time for saying prayers, sir; I've always too much to do."

"Oh yes, you can; the prayer I shall give you you can say at all times. When you're in the stable cleaning and feeding your horses; when you're waiting to be hired; and even when you're driving along the road, you can pray the prayer I shall teach you."

"Well, sir, I can't recollect prayers; I never had a wonderful memory. I'm sure, sir, I shan't be able to say this prayer you talk about."

"Oh yes, you will, for I shall give you a very short prayer. There are only twelve words in it. 'O Lord God, for Jesus Christ's sake, grant me thy Holy Spirit.'"

"Well, sir, that's short enough to be sure. Let me see, what is it, sir?"

"I shall divide it into three parts for you. Now say it after me. 'O Lord God.'"

"'O Lord God.'"

"'For Jesus Christ's sake.'"

"'For Jesus Christ's sake.'"

"'Grant me thy Holy Spirit.'"

"'Grant me thy Holy Spirit.'"

"Now try if you can say the whole."

"'O Lord God, for Jesus Christ's sake, grant me thy Holy Spirit.'"

"Now do you know for what you are to pray? You are to say, 'O Lord God,' because He made you, and gives you daily your food and clothes, and keeps you alive. If He chose, He could this instant take away your breath, and then you would immediately die. And He can make you happy, and deserves that you should love Him, and has a right to your obedience. He will not only take care of your body, but will take care also of your soul; and because He loves your soul, has written the Bible that you might know what to do to be quite happy in this world and the next."

"Was the Bible then written, sir, to make us happy? I'm sure, sir, I didn't know that."

"Yes, Butler, it certainly was; and the ten

commandments, if you were to obey them, would make you perfectly happy."

"Ah, sir, them ten commandments, I've not obeyed them, you say, and I'm sure, sir, no one ever could do all they bid us to do. Now, I've heard one of those people who go to church always, and read their Bible, and make a great many prayers, say that if we should only wish to do wrong, we have broken the commandments. Why, sir, it is impossible to keep them so."

"The person who told you that was quite right, and if you pray as I tell you, you will find that he is quite right."

"Then I can't see how we're to be saved, sir."

"When God saw that man could not keep the commandments, He sent Christ into the world that men might be saved, not by the works of the law—for if we offend but in one point, we are guilty of all, and though we may think that we keep that law, and obey it perfectly, what is our obedience—our fancied righteousness—in the sight of a pure and holy

God? Verily nothing better than, as the Bible tells us, filthy rags. How, then, can we be saved? Not by the works of the law, but by faith in Christ—by believing on Him—coming to Him; for Christ died on the Cross to save sinners, and if we believe on Him we shall be saved. I wish you also to ask God for the Holy Spirit, because this Holy Spirit will teach you of Christ, and will show you how sinful you have been, and how necessary it is that you should flee to the Cross of Christ for salvation; for, remember, by Christ alone can we poor sinners be saved. 'There is none other name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved, but the name of Jesus.' This Holy Spirit, too, will help you to do what is good; for as I have told you, we are by nature so sinful that we can of ourselves do nothing good; it will also make you love your Bible, love prayer, and love all that's good."

"Well, sir, and why do you say, 'For Jesus Christ's sake'?"

"Because Jesus Christ told his disciples before He left this world, 'Whatsoever ye

ɜk the Father in my name, believing, ye ɹ receive.' God was displeased and angry with ɹen on account of their sins; so much so, that 'no man can come unto Him but by Christ.' Christ is our friend, and He is God's Son; if, therefore, we ask God in the name of his Son, He will, out of love to his Son, grant us that which we ask Him for."

"I am very much obliged to you, sir, and shall try to say this prayer over and over again, as often as I think of it."

The clergyman then prayed earnestly that the seed he had been scattering in the heart of his companion might take deep root there, and bring forth abundant fruit to the glory of our Redeemer, and the salvation of an immortal soul. He knew that there lay in the path ten thousand difficulties, long and fixed habits of sin, utter darkness, and the society of evil and ungodly men; but he knew that God's power had converted Paul from being a persecutor of the church, to one of its boldest and most zealous defenders, and he had himself experienced the same power in changing his

own heart, and giving to him a love of Christ, and repentance for sins, and a desire of holiness, when he was a careless, indifferent, and scoffing sinner. Besides, God's promise had been given, and his attribute was truth, and his nature was unchangeable. He besought Him, therefore, by his own name, for his own Son's sake, in fulfilment of his promise, that this poor man's prayer might be answered, though he offered it almost in ignorance of the purport of its language; that He who hath not called the wise and the noble, and the mighty to exemplify his glory, and make known his power, would now take a poor creature, full of darkness and full of sin, and make him a monument of his mercy, and a vessel for his praise.

As they entered the city of Winchester, John suddenly said, "Do you know, sir, that prayer you gave me I've been saying a great many times, and I've got it now quite perfect; and, sir, I've been determining in my own mind, sir, to say it as often as I can."

"I'm glad to hear you say so, John, and I've been praying for you, that you may do so,

and that God will hearken to your petition, and give you that which will make you a more useful, a happier, and a better man. He will not forget you, John, if you do not forget Him. May He bless you."

Several years had passed away, when the clergyman had occasion once more to visit Southampton. Passing through one of the bye streets, he saw written in large letters over the door of a neat-looking house, "John Butler, licensed to let out gigs, chaises, and saddle-horses on hire." The conversation he had held with the driver on the Winchester road suddenly crossed his mind, and wondering whether this could be the same man, he walked up to the house, and tapping at the door, inquired of a plainly-dressed, but respectable-looking woman, for John Butler.

"He is not at home, sir, but I think he may be in the stables. Johnny, go and see if your father is in the stable, and tell him a gentleman wants to speak to him directly; make haste, now, as fast as you can."

The little boy was just running out, when

John Butler came in, and gazing for a moment on the stranger, he then rushed forward, and seizing both his hands, with most affectionate earnestness, exclaimed—

"God bless you, sir, arn't you the gentleman I drove over to Winchester some time ago? You taught me, sir, that short but blessed prayer—'O Lord God, for Jesus Christ's sake, grant me thy Holy Spirit!'"

The clergyman answered him, "Yes, John, I am; and I hope you found that all I said was good, and all I foretold was true."

"Oh, yes; the Lord bless you! I have, through the grace of God. I'm now a happy man, sir, and all my family, thank God, are happy too, and all through that good advice you gave me, and the prayer you taught me."

"Well, I am glad of that. How did you first become really serious—when, that is, did you begin to enjoy religion?"

"You shall hear all about it—I used to say this prayer over very often to myself, and said it as you told me, while I was at work, and at all sorts of times, sir. And so I went on for

some time, till one Sunday it happened I wasn't hired, and I was loitering near the church, and so, as I had nothing to do, I thought I would just go in and see what was a-going on, and the prayers, sir, were just over, so the minister took his text, 'The blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin.' And then, sir, he proved to me how great a sinner I was, and that if I wasn't clean washed in Christ's blood, I never could be saved; and I began to think a good deal about my soul then, sir, and so, next Sunday I went again, and persuaded my wife to go too; and ever since then we went always, sir, and I never afterwards went out on a Sunday with any one, never found that I wanted bread or clothes, and my wife will tell you how happy we have been ever since, and we always read a Bible which we have bought, and pray every night with our dear children, and God has, indeed, blessed us, sir."

Then his wife joined with him in thanking the clergyman for his precious advice, and the sweet little prayer he had given her dear husband.

The clergyman blessed God for his faithfulness, and thanked Him for his mercy; and before they parted, the happy little family knelt around him, while he offered up prayer and thanksgiving on their behalf.

POOR HESTER.

Some time ago I was called to visit a poor young woman in her last illness. I never knew her till she was confined by her last illness to her bed; but as some particulars of her former life may serve as lessons to others, I will tell them. When she was only eighteen she married, because she was unhappy at home. How foolishly many young people marry before they have studied the character of their intended partner, and before they have made any preparation for their future wants! Fathers and mothers too should beware how, by harsh cross words and contradictory tempers, they provoke their children to wrath, and thus induce them to take imprudent steps, for which oftentimes the misery of their future lives must pay. So poor Hester married; but observe, not as St. Paul advises, "only in the Lord." I mean to say that I suppose neither she nor her husband thought for one moment

that they could not be happy without God's blessing. I suppose neither she nor her husband bore in mind that this life is to last but a short while, and after death comes the judgment. Hester did not reflect; and the consequence was, that when she had been a wife but a little time, she found too late that the man who does not fear God is not likely to be a kind husband. He very soon grew tired of her; and when she was ill—and she was ill very often—she met with none of that care and attention which a poor sick woman needs so much. Every farthing that her husband earned, and all that he could obtain of her earnings, he wasted on his own sinful and debasing pleasures.

She did her best to keep together the little furniture that they had bought at first; but many an article of convenience her cruel husband pawned or sold, till at last their house was reduced to a state of the lowest poverty. So what with unkind treatment and want of necessaries, poor Hester was reduced, in about four or five years, to a very bad state of health indeed. Her poor little infants died one after another in

"She was carried to a neighbouring infirmary."—PAGE 201.

their birth, and it pleased God in his mercy to take another from her before it was a year old. And though no doubt she, as a mother, must have felt very sad when she saw her poor baby laid out in its clean white dress, and when she thought that he would never smile at her nor learn to know her, and make up by his love for his father's unkindness, yet I cannot think of all the sin and sorrow these little ones escape whom the Saviour takes to heaven, without saying, "Even so, Father, for so it seemeth good in thy sight."

Then poor Hester's trouble brought on a very bad fever. For five weeks she was almost senseless; and when she came to herself, whether it was through bad nursing, I cannot tell, but it was found that one of her arms was put out of joint; and though she was carried to a neighbouring infirmary, and had the best attention paid her there, yet it was too late to be set again. As soon as she was in the infirmary her wicked husband sold everything that was left, sent their only remaining child to a neighbour, shut up the house, and went away.

Oh! the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel. How it must have made poor Hester's heart ache to think that her only child was thrown on the wide world to the care of strangers, and that he to whom she had a right to look for all care and kindness had in her need deserted her. She told me that when she heard of it her heart was almost broken; but when she told me, happily she had learnt to add, "The Lord does all things well."

And now you must observe how good is God in providing the means of grace in every situation of life in this Christian country. I am afraid that poor Hester had hitherto neglected to attend any place of worship; but the long-suffering Lord, whom she had so long forgotten, when He laid her on a bed of sickness, in his great mercy brought near a kind and faithful friend to tell her that she was a sinner, and that Jesus Christ died to save sinners. But Paul may plant and Apollos may water, it is all of no use unless God gives the increase; every heart is dark until his Holy Spirit enlightens it, and every heart is cold and hard till his grace warms

and softens it. And now from this time there was a mighty change in this poor young woman.

"If any man be in Christ he is a new creature." And, with a solemn affirmation, our blessed Lord says, "Verily, verily, except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." Let the reader and the hearer of this little book inquire, "Has this change passed upon my heart? If I am a disciple of Jesus Christ my actions will surely show it."

Now, Hester had from this time new hopes and new fears, new motives and new actions—she was a new creature. She went home, still very ill, because she had been told that if she did not her poor little boy would be sent into the workhouse. She went home to great distress and poverty, but she was rich in faith and an heir of heaven. She had comforts that she had never had before. She knew that God had promised never to leave nor forsake her; and though oftentimes not a creature came in all day, and she had only her little boy to reach her the bit of bread which stood on

the shelf, she felt sure that God would be true to his word; and indeed so He was. Her ignorant neighbours could not account for the change that had taken place in her. They said it was quite wonderful, quite unaccountable, to see how patient she was. They did not know that she depended on the mighty God who has said, "I will make all thy bed in thy sickness."

But her greatest trouble was yet to come. When the weather was very cold, it was quite sad to see how much she suffered, when for days together nobody came in to kindle her little fire. But it so happened that one freezing morning a neighbour did take pity on her, and made up a comfortable blaze, and then put the room to rights, and went away. The poor little boy had not seen anything he liked so well for many a day; and as his bed-ridden mother could not hinder him, he got out of bed, and went to warm himself, and play by the fire. In one moment his little thin bed-gown was in flames; and there lay the poor crippled woman, not able

to move, and there was her miserable baby burning—her only child—and the door was shut, and no one came to help. At last some neighbours heard the poor mother and the child shriek, and came in. But it was too late to save him. He died the same night.

Many people came in to look at him, and to help to put him in his little coffin, and amongst others his cruel father; but he took little notice of the poor, sad mother. As soon as the funeral was over Hester was left alone, and no one came to take care of her or to comfort her. But "the Lord will provide." It was just at this time, when she was left so very desolate, that God by his providence introduced friends to her, and these friends for all the rest of her life supplied her with all that she absolutely needed as far as they could, and visited her whenever they were able.

It was at this time that I first became acquainted with Hester, and she set me an example of patience, of faith, of a forgiving

disposition, which I desire never to forget. I saw her oftentimes faint for want of food. Sometimes there was a bit of bread on the shelf, but she could not reach it, and the poor little child who used to divide it with her was gone. Oftentimes there was none; but she would say, "I don't think my Lord will leave me to starve. He said, 'Bread shall be given,' and, sure enough, just when I am most hungry you come in." She used to cry when she talked of her little boy, but would add to the sad story, "We shall meet again, and my Lord does not leave me comfortless."

Often, when anybody came near her low door, they used to hear her trying to sing a verse or two of hymns that she had learnt by having them repeated to her; and though her voice was very weak and feeble, it was, I doubt not, the beginning of that hymn of triumph and glory to God and the Lamb which she is now singing in heaven.

And now I wish you to observe how God provides for his people. He does not

promise them great things, but He does say, "Verily thou shalt be fed." He says, "Bread shall be given." And He teaches us to pray, "Give us day by day our daily bread."

I saw Hester for the last time on a Saturday. I would not wish to pain you by describing how very, very ill she was. The state of her poor body reminded me of that description, in the first chapter of Isaiah, which, recollect, still more fitly describes the state of every soul—yours and mine—by nature: "From the soul of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores." Oh! having such vile bodies, is it not a blessing to have hope in Him who can fashion them like unto his glorious body. Is it not a blessing to take hold of that promise, "It is sown in corruption, it is raised in power."

Poor Hester was glad to see me. She was waiting in patient hope till her God should call her home. A kind friend had given me a little money to lay out for her; and as she could not

act for herself, I trusted to a neighbour to procure for her a few necessaries for every day as long as the money lasted. It held out, as we reckoned it would, to the Monday week, and that very day Hester ceased to need it. Her Saviour took her home to that country where they hunger no more, neither thirst any more; where none shall say, I am sick.

GOOD SEED.

I ONCE gave away some tracts to a little sweep boy. He was then about ten years of age; but his stunted growth made him look some years younger. Upon talking with him, I found that his story was such as to excite more than common compassion. From the disgraceful circumstances of his birth he had been forsaken by both his parents, and was bound to this painful business at the early age of five years. His mother was a washerwoman in good employ, and lived near him; but she said his black clothes spoiled her customers' linen; and she turned him to the door, whenever he sought quiet and shelter at her fireside. She wished to cast him from her, because he was in all respects a disgrace to her. This was harder to bear than all the rest, and called forth his master's pity, who said "he was a good boy, and should not want for schooling; that he would

send him to a night school, and that he would do well, as many of his boys had done, when they entered on other trades."

To repeated questions, the little fellow always answered, "his master was very good to him, and his mistress very kind to him when he was ill." He seemed fully aware of the trials of his situation in other respects, and was suffering much from a sore heel; but there was about him an appearance of patient endurance, and honest simplicity, that rendered him very interesting.

To encourage him to take pains with his reading, I gave him some tracts; and told him that if he came back and read some part of them to me, he should have more. He shortly returned, read well to me, and received more for himself, and for a companion he brought with him. He was told to return again when he had read these, and he should have a Testament.

He returned no more; and the whole circumstances, in the lapse of time, passed from my memory, till they were recalled in a most

pleasing manner some years after. One morning I was told that a young man, who had called twice before, too early to see me, was below, wishing much to speak with me; that he had some tracts in his hand, which he said I had given him when he was a little boy. I went instantly to the kitchen, and found there a fine-looking sailor youth of about sixteen, or more, well clad and of a robust healthy appearance. All remembrance of my little sweep friend was gone from me; nor could I have known his disguised features again, had I seen him. The youth rose, and presenting the tracts, said, "Ma'am, you were very kind to me when I was a little boy, and gave me these tracts; I have read them very often, and should like some more, and will give you these for them, if you please."

"Oh! you shall have some more," I replied, "and keep these too; I fancy you are the soldier's boy, whose father was killed at Vittoria, and who came to our door to sell balls for cleaning plate some years ago."

"No, ma'am," he said, "I was a sweep boy,

and you gave me these tracts when I was at school; and promised me a Testament if I was a good boy. I never came for the Testament, for this is the first time I have been in —— since I went away; but I wished to come and thank you, and ask you to give me a few more tracts for these." "But where have you been? And why did you not come for the Testament before you went away? I will give you one now." "Oh, ma'am, I have a Bible now; I would have come, but I went away in a great hurry; the older I grew, the more I disliked my business; so I went and tried for a berth on board some ship." "And did you soon get a berth?" "Yes, ma'am, directly; and I have never wanted bread since."

"Had you a Bible when you went away?" "No, ma'am, but I took these tracts, and my Psalm Book in a little bundle; I had no more books in the world, but I got my Bible soon after." "And did you get good in reading these tracts, and comfort in reading your Bible?" "Oh! yes, ma'am, great good and comfort; they were often my good and comfort,

"I went and tried for a berth on board ship."—PAGE 212.

when I could get a quiet corner, either on deck or below, when all others were either drinking, or sleeping, or playing games." "How are you sure that the comfort you took in the Bible was of the right kind?" "Because it made me at peace, and I always found composure whatever was the matter. Last spring when our ship was wrecked, and we were just saved by taking to the boat, all the men, who were at other times merry enough, and often cursing and swearing, were calling out for fear, and many of them just like madmen; but my mind was firmly stayed on the Lord, who had heard me when I called on Him in my trouble. I had my whole trust in Him. And oh! it was a great mercy that we were all saved, for we saw a collier go down, and heard the cries of the drowning men, and could do nothing for them. I think I hear their voices still. Sailors are often the worst men that live, but they of all men need to be holy men, for they are always in the midst of death and danger."

"But," said I, "had you always these

feelings of confidence in God, ever since you went to sea?" "Oh! no." "When did you first find reason thus to trust in the Lord?" "It was when we were in a great storm, soon after I first went to sea. I was filled with the fears of death, for I knew I was a sinner, but I called on the Lord for mercy, and I found mercy of the Lord, and I have found it ever since." "Did you, when you found this mercy of the Lord, learn to see and feel the evil of sin?" "Yes, ma'am, the cursing and swearing, and blasphemy, and drunkenness I saw grieved me much, and I left one or two ships because I could not bear it any longer; and tried to get where there was less profaneness."

"I know that in your profession there are too many who run greedily in the way of iniquity, and sin before God with a high hand; but did you never meet with any comrade who feared the Lord, and could be a comfortable friend to you?" "No, not any yet." "Then you should have lent your tracts and spoken to them, and tried to make them what you wished."

"Oh, ma'am, they think there can be no sense in a boy, and it is always just a word and a blow." "But you shall take a good many tracts with you this time, and you must both read them, and lend them, and the Lord in his own good time will raise up a friend for you."

I did not wish to appear insensible to the difficulties of this young Christian's situation, but to lead him to take comfort in the precious promises, and in the faithfulness of God in particularly fulfilling them to this child of his providence. I told him to take comfort for the future, in considering how God "had found him in the waste howling wilderness, had led him about, and instructed him, had kept him as the apple of an eye."

He seemed to feel all the truth and sweetness of that promise, "When father and mother forsake me, the Lord will take me up," and to acknowledge he had thus been taken up. He had called on the Lord in his trouble, and He had delivered him out of his distress. I asked him "if when he had opportunity he made use

of Christian ordinances?" "Oh, yes; they are a great comfort to me. Perhaps, ma'am, you have not heard of the floating chapel on the Thames. I always go there when I can, and I hear such good ministers; it is such a comfort."

He then gave me a particular account of this chapel, and its services, seeming to feel pleasure in describing what I had never seen. I told him frequent mention was made in Scripture of "those who go down to the sea in ships, and see God's wonders in the great waters;" and asked him if it was not comfortable to him to read in the New Testament how the Lord Jesus chose for his friends and companions, not the rich and learned, but those who, like him, were often "toiling in rowing, the wind being contrary to them"?

"Oh, yes," he replied, "and He was with them in all their difficulties, though He sometimes seemed to be asleep; but He soon awoke at their cries and prayers, and spoke the raging seas into a calm; and He has done that for us

too. But how ungrateful it was of the people to say 'What manner of man is this,' and to call Him a man who stilled the seas."

"Yes," said I, "it is sweet to read of the Lord Jesus, how unwearied He was in doing good to the souls and bodies of men. They who did not know his godhead, wondered that the winds and the seas should obey Him; but we know that He can do greater things than these. He can speak 'peace' to the troubled conscience. He can, by the power of his grace, overcome the rebellion and enmity of the human heart, and convert the drunkard, the Sabbath-breaker, the profane swearer, into the holy, humble, sober-minded Christian. He can restrain the stormy passions of men, which is, you know, a greater work than to still the raging elements."

"Oh, yes," he said, "that is the grand work; there was John Wildon," taking up one of the tracts that lay before him, "what a change was wrought in him! What a hardened man he was! What an unkind husband and father too."

Our conversation was here interrupted; and as I left him, I could not but feel in my heart, "This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in my eyes."

THE LORD WILL PROVIDE.

No one can have a greater dislike to paying too much attention to dreams than I have; but I heard and wrote down the following interposition of Providence from the aged Christian's own mouth:—

"I was passed," she said, "from Scotland, where all my friends lived, to this town. In consequence of my husband having fits now so often, his mind got too weak to follow his work, and he belonged here. We were put into a lone house, a little off the town, where I lived alone with him and our two little girls for some years. Many were the afflictions I saw then, for he had been a good, kind man to me. But he could neither feel for me nor speak reasonably, but generally kept his bed. The parish giving us so much, I always on Saturday paid for my last week's food (and little enough it was for four), and took out what I wanted for the next

week at the shop. One Saturday, I went heavy-hearted, and said, 'I have no money to-day. There is something not settled, and the parish refuse my pay.' The shopkeeper replied, 'Then I cannot trust such as you. Perhaps they will put you in the workhouse, and then where is my money to come from?' With an overloaded heart, I walked my half-mile home, empty-handed. I knew I had only one little bit of bread and two dried herrings at home. My husband was too insensible to tell him my troubles, and at night for their suppers, I divided one herring in three for them, and my morsel of bread. Before bed time, I called my little girls as usual to the side of his bed, where I always had our prayers, and I prayed, as you may think, very heartily for food, and indeed for clothes, for we had little enough, and then we sang our hymn and went to bed. In the morning they asked for their breakfast, but I said let us have our prayers first again. We prayed by his bed, and sang our morning hymn. I then divided our other herring, and we had no more. The children, refused, as well they might, so hungry,

"Turning out of the road to come to our house."—PAGE 221.

to go up to the Sunday School, and we all stayed at home. Again and again I begged God that the overseer, on whom I had called, might remember our hunger. In the middle of the afternoon church, one of my children said, 'Mother, there is a man turning out of the road to come to our house.' 'Not to ours, I think. What has he to do here? Sundays, no one comes here, child.' She watched, and said, 'Yes, he is come here.' When a gentleman's servant entered, and began, 'Mrs. L., how are you and your poor husband? What should you think is my errand? My mistress called me just now, and said, "Go down to-day to Mrs. L.'s, and ask her, how do you get on? what food have you? and what clothes? for I have been disturbed to-night and last night, dreaming she was starving, and all of them suffering, and if I dream the same a third night, I should like to feel more certain when I awoke it was false" ' (the lady being from Scotland, on that account had shown her some kindness). "When the servant had spoken and delivered his message, I burst into tears and said, answer her

from yourself. I then threw open the cupboard and drawers, in which few, very few clothes, and no remnant of food remained. Tears came into the man's eyes, for he had a family and children too, and he said, 'I'll tell her you have nothing, and I am sure she will send me again. I am so very glad I came.' About two hours after he left, the children said, 'Mother, the man's coming again.' He did come, with a loaf, a leg of mutton, a blanket, and money. Oh, I had hard work on Saturday evening to sing my hymn after my prayers, but I did; but that night, singing seemed to suit my heart best of all. How has my heart been strengthened in prayer all through my life by this wonderful answer which God sent me."

The Lord will provide. You cannot say how, or perhaps conceive how it can be; but nothing is impossible with God. He has all hearts in his hands. The rich are his stewards, and God can draw upon them for the relief of his poor, afflicted children just as He pleases.

I was once called to visit the cottage of a

poor woman whose son, a lad about six years of age, was dangerously ill of a fever. The child was too weak to pay much attention to me, but I took the opportunity of addressing the mother on the concerns of her soul, and among other things urged on her the duty and the privilege of prayer. She seemed distressed, and on my inquiring the cause, she told me her heart smote her bitterly, for she had once on a remarkable occasion been signally taught this lesson, and yet had so soon forgotten it. It was a Saturday evening. This very child, then only two years old, was lying very ill, and unable to eat the coarse food, which was all she had in the house. She knew that without proper nourishment he must die; and yet, where was she to get it? Her husband had flung himself out of the cottage, as usual, intoxicated; his weekly earnings had been squandered at the ale-house, his credit in the neighbourhood was gone, and the few friends she once had, had turned their backs on her on account of her imprudence. The child screamed bitterly. She laid it on the bed, drew the

curtains round it, and in the agony of her soul bolted the door, threw herself on a chair in the farthest corner of the miserable apartment, and covering her face with her hands, tried, for the first time almost in her life, *to pray*. "Let me not see the death of my son." And He who sent his angel to Hagar in the desert, provided a friend for this friendless outcast. While she lay there almost stupified with sorrow, and supplicating his pity in broken and almost hopeless ejaculations, she heard a rap at the door; and, starting up, fearful lest anyone had overheard her, she opened it, and a distant relation, who had never noticed her before, entered with a basket, and told her that hearing that her son was ill, she had brought her a couple of ducks ready dressed, and some other nice provisions, as she feared she might be in want. These served her little boy till he recovered; and she, struck with the remarkable occurrence, for a time was constant in prayer and the study of her long-neglected Bible, where the words, "while they are yet speaking, I will hear," met her eye.

An Indian Bungalow.—PAGE 225.

AN INDIAN NURSE.

This interesting convert was a Hindoo woman, about forty years of age, and had been in the service of some truly Christian ladies for nearly ten years. During this time they had occasionally spoken to her on the subject of Christianity. At first their words fell on a listless ear, but of late the case was altered—the woman became deeply interested, and sought for religious instruction as she had never done before. It was at this juncture that I first saw her. The ladies in whose employ she was had taught her much—had taught her as far as their knowledge of the native language had permitted them; but they now became anxious that she should be still further instructed, and as ours was the missionary station nearest their dwelling, they called to inquire whether the ayah might come to us for teaching in Christianity. Of course I most gladly acceded to

this request, and from that time she came to me nearly every day for an hour or an hour and a half.

One difficulty presented itself. She could not read, and though I tried to teach her, she made but a slow learner at that; but in gaining a knowledge of Divine truth, the case was far different. She never forgot what was once read and explained to her; thus, in an incredibly short time, she became perfectly conversant with the life of Christ, and would often remark upon the various accounts given of the same occurrence by different sacred writers. They never perplexed her, for she had strong faith, and she appreciated in our holy Gospel that which we should all be able to trace—a peculiar vocation in each of the evangelists for catching some distinct ray of the glory of Christ which others would not catch, and for reflecting them to the world.

I never saw any one take more delight in the Bible; it became her meat and drink, her meditation day and night. After making it our study for some weeks, I began reading

another book to her—a story of a Bengalee Christian village, with its inhabitants. This book generally interests our people very much; it interested her too, but only for two or three days; then she said, with some hesitation, "If you please, I would rather hear again the words of Christ Himself; there are no words like his." I gladly returned to the good book, and that day she asked me to read the fourteenth chapter of St. John. I did not then know that the Spirit of God was rapidly making her meet for one of those many mansions. It was her great delight to rehearse my lesson to her ladies at night; and the following day she would usually tell me of any additional remarks they might have made.

Gratitude is thought to be a quality in which the native of India is utterly deficient; indeed, the Bengalee language contains no word to express it; but this woman was exceedingly grateful. She was never tired of speaking to me of the love and kindness showed her by her mistresses, particularly the lady who had taught her most of Christ. I then felt

more than ever what a powerful influence may be exerted by a silent, holy, consistent walk; for the ayah often used to say, if this lady had any faults she had never discovered them; and her own expression on another occasion was, "She was sure, when her lady came to die, that Jesus would not only let the angels bring her into heaven, but that He Himself would stand at heaven's gate and give her his hand, and bring her in." I said to her, "Yes, ayah, and do you ever think what a glorious thing it will be for you to spend eternity in that heaven with one you love and respect so much, worshipping the same Saviour, having the same God?" "Oh, yes," she said, "indeed I do; my only fear is that sometimes I think too much of the happiness of always living with her, and too little of the happiness of living with Christ!"

Perhaps the following is a little thing to mention, and yet the remembrance of it is pleasant to me, as showing the feeling of grateful affection existing in the heart of this poor woman. One afternoon, while I was reading with her, some one came with a

quantity of wild honey for sale. I said I did not want any, not liking it of that description; but I happened to turn to the ayah and remark, "I like the honey that comes from your country." She was a native of Syphet, the district whence all our oranges are procured, and the circumstance of the bees extracting their honey from the orange-blossom gives it a peculiar flavour. A week after, the ayah brought me a jar of this honey, saying, "I did not rest until I found a woman from my country who could sell me some of the honey you said you liked."

There was one feature in the religious history of this interesting convert which was peculiarly striking, and this was her perceptible growth in grace, as she came within the atmosphere of Christ's spirit; it was as if a gale of heaven fanned her fevered brain, and made her feel her soul's health was not perfect. The radiance of so great a sanctity deepened the shades of conscious sin.

She could never hear the story of Christ's sufferings without weeping, because, as she

said, all that agony had been laid upon Him for her iniquity. On one occasion she asked me whether it would be necessary for her to learn a form of prayer. Had I found her ignorant of the nature of prayer, I should have recommended this; but on questioning her I learnt that she was accustomed to lay all her wants, both spiritual and temporal, at the feet of her Father which is in heaven, and that in a manner so simple, so child-like, so unconventional, that I felt at once all human teaching now was utterly uncalled for.

About eight weeks of my acquaintance with the ayah had elapsed, when she became deeply solicitous for Christian baptism. In preparing her for it specially, I was led to speak much of the Holy Spirit's work. This had purposely been omitted hitherto. I had judged it best to let her mind at first dwell solely on the atonement—that atonement which yielded her so much delight—rather than perplex her, as I thought, with the abstruse doctrine of the Trinity; the event showed me that my own faith had been most weak, my judgment quite wrong.

The woman listened with deep attention whilst I read to her of the descent of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost, and whilst I still further explained to her the nature and need of the Spirit's influences; she then suddenly started up, exclaiming with an enthusiasm I have seldom seen in a native of India, "I thought so; it is all explained now, all explained," and then burst into tears. "What is explained, ayah?" I asked. "Oh," she said, "I thought there must have been a higher power that I knew not of, who wrought the wondrous change in my heart. It is all explained; I see now why, when I tell my fellow-servants of Jesus' love, they call me credulous, and laugh at me, while all the time to me it is as if I saw Jesus nailed to the cross, and heard Him say, 'All this I bore for you; look unto Me, and live.'"

From that time the third person of the blessed Trinity became as precious to her soul as the Saviour, whom she loved so much; and she used to be particularly interested in all passages in the Bible where the Spirit was

mentioned. Thus, the first ten chapters in the Acts, which I afterwards read with her, yielded her great delight; and I have never since perused the story of the conversion and baptism of Cornelius without thinking with gratitude and profit of her sweet, simple remarks on that record of Divine grace. It was the last chapter we read together.

She was baptized on the last Sunday of August, a day of great joy to us all; to the ladies who had first been the means of leading her to Jesus, and who were present at our little mission chapel to witness the ceremony; to my husband, to myself, to the members of the congregation; and it was a day of great joy to the convert herself, her only sorrow being, as she herself expressed it, that this baptism into newness of life should have been purchased by the death of Christ.

Three short weeks passed, and almost the same little group again stood waiting round; but it was at another place, to witness a different scene. It was to commit to the ground in the sure and certain hope of a joyful

resurrection the mortal remains of her who had so lately been brought out of heathen darkness into the bright light of the Gospel of Christ.

A rapid, painless, peaceful illness had closed her earthly career. Tears were shed, indeed, but we dried them up, for we felt sorrow had no right to mar the holy time. Jesus had prepared her for Himself, and while yet her faith was unsullied, her "first love," warm and ardent, had given her to dwell where "there shall be neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away." As we stood around that humble grave, we, one and all, felt the only tribute that could worthily be rendered there was the silent hymn of gratitude and heartfelt praise.

This account shows how wonderfully the Spirit of God can work even on a heart originally degraded by heathenism and superstition; and it also shows what a rich provision there is in the Word of God alone to meet the wants of the poorest and the most ignorant of his

creatures. Whilst our unbelieving hearts would ask, What is there for so many?—the Great Giver of the feast confidently replies, "Make the men sit down;" and they have sat down, wise men and simple, philosophers and peasants, besides women and children, and there has been enough and to spare.

HE CARETH FOR YOU.

"WILL you come to meet me, Hannah?" said the poor widow, E——n, as she was about to leave her home for a day's washing in the next town. "Yes, mother," replied the child; "for mistress will give me something to eat."

So about five o'clock in the evening, Hannah set off to go to her mother. Her way was on the high road; and before she had gone far, a gentleman was passing along in a gig. Hannah, as is too often the habit with children, took hold of the back part of the carriage, by which she thought, perhaps, to be helped up the hill. The traveller soon noticed the girl; and on his doing so, she let go her hold; but he was very kind to her, and asked her if she would not like better to ride inside. Hannah said she should: and the kind-hearted stranger took her in. He then asked her about her father and mother. "My father is dead, sir."

you, mother, when I was in bed, pray that He would be a husband to the widow, and a father to the fatherless; and we should not have had this if you had not prayed; and now He's answered your prayer. And when the gentleman gave me the shilling, I said, 'Now I know there is a Lord,' only I did not let him hear me say so."

In one of the most ill-built, filthy hovels I ever saw lives an old lame widow. You enter a low, tottering door, and see in a dirty, fireless, comfortless room, an old, haggard-looking woman, sitting on a crazy ragged bedstead, her iron spectacles turned up on her cap, her dark eyes beaming with delight, and her Bible open on her lap. She hardly notices you as you enter, or if she greet you with any expression, it is by lifting up her hand and uttering faintly, "Glory, glory." Such is widow S——. A relation of hers, who is in better circumstances, once came to see her; and as she lived at a distance, the old woman determined to sleep herself in a lumber closet, and leave the better